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Science, Technology and Policy

- Justice **Srikrishna Committee** submits its report “**A free and fair digital economy – protecting privacy, empowering Indians**” to Government on July 26, 2018, a landmark development in India’s growth in the digital world
- **ISRO** tests out crew ejection feature on July 5, 2018, in preparation for manned space flights in future; launches **two satellites for UK** on September 16, 2018; **Prime Minister Modi** announces a **manned space mission** by 2022 (75th year of Indian Independence) in his Independence Day speech on August 15, 2018; **ISRO chief** talks of December 2021/ January 2022 target; **NASA Sun Mission** (Parker Solar Probe) successfully launched on August 12, 2018 starts a new phase in space exploration; On August 30, 2018 **Uber** selects India as one of the first five countries to try out Air taxi service **Uber Air** (to be a reality in the next five years)
- **Supreme Court** gave **constitutional validity** to **AADHAR** with selective targeted use by Government on September 26, 2018
- The ambitious insurance scheme for 500 million Indians **Modi Care** (Aayushman Bharat) starts on September 23, 2018 with lots of promise
- French engineering firm **Alstom** launches **Hydrogen-powered train** in Europe in September 2018
- Government of India **merges Vijaya Bank** and **Dena Bank** into **Bank of Baroda** on September 17, 2018
- **Rafale deal** (defence deal between India and France) rocks the Nation much of September 2018

Products

- **Microsoft** announces **Surface Go** in July 2018 to compete with Apple iPad
- **Google** rolls out Android P officially as **Android Pie** on August 6, 2018; re-launches **Tez** as **Google Pay** on August 28, 2018
- **Samsung** launches **Galaxy Note 9** globally in New York on August 9, 2018
- **NPCI** (National Payment Corporation of India) launches **UPI 2.0** on August 16, 2018
- **Nokia** launches **Nokia 6.1 Plus** in the Indian market on August 21, 2018 at a very attractive price point
- **Xiaomi** launches **Poco F1** on August 23, 2018
- **Apple** launches new **iPhone XS & iPhone XS Max** and **Apple Watch 4** on September 12, 2018
- **Amazon** launches a **slew of products** (60+) on September 20, 2018 including many variants of Echo, Microwave oven and even a product for the car – **all powered by Alexa!**

Markets

- **Apple** creates history; its market capitalization **goes past \$ 1 Trillion** on NASDAQ Exchange at 11:57 AM on August 2, 2018, the first ever for a listed US corporation; **Amazon** follows; **market capitalization touches \$ 1 Trillion** on September 4, 2018
- **Microsoft** stock sky rockets on July 12, 2018 with stock price going past \$ 100 and market capitalization going past \$ 800 Billion, for the first time in history
- **Facebook** sees a **drop of \$ 119 Billion** in market capitalization on July 26, 2018, the largest ever single day drop for any company in the history of stock markets; even worse than **Intel** losing \$ 90 Billion in market value in one day on Sep 22, 2000!
- **Xiaomi IPO** on July 9, 2018 in Hong Kong sees mixed response
- **Broadcom** (semiconductor company) acquiring **CA** (IT infrastructure and security services company) for \$ 18.9 Billion on July 10, 2018 surprised everyone, particularly after its failed attempt to acquire Qualcomm for more than \$ 100 Billion last year

- **French** IT Services major **Atos** acquired **Syntel** (Bharat Desai founded Indian IT Services company founded, with 23,000 people and nearly \$ 1 Billion annual turnover) for \$ 2 Billion on July 23, 2018
- **Cisco** acquired Ann Arbor, Michigan based cloud and device security company **Duo Security** for \$ 2.35 Billion on August 2, 2018
- Indian mid-size IT Services company of the RPG group **Zensar** acquired **IndiGo Slate** (US-based customer experience company founded by Sandy Sharma and Aaron Duggal) for \$ 18 million in July 2018
- **TechMahindra** acquires Czech **Inter Informatics** on August 22, 2018
- **Amazon Pay** buys personal assistant platform **TapZo** (said to be the first India acquisition for Amazon Pay) on August 29, 2018
- **Wal-Mart Labs India** acquires **Appsfly** on September 3, 2018
- US-based **Ebix** acquires Mumbai-based **Miles** for \$ 19 Million on September 3, 2018
- **Infosys** acquires **Fluidio** (Finland-based leader in Salesforce consulting) on September 14, 2018
- **Cognizant** Australia-based **SaaSFocus** on August 23, 2018; buys US-based **ATG** on September 16, 2018
- **Amazon** acquires Birla's retail chain **More** (with more than 500 stores) on September 24, 2018
- **FlipKart** acquires Israel-based start-up **Upstream Commerce** on September 25, 2018
- India's stock market indices **Sensex** touch new peak of 37,000 on July 26, 2018 and 38,989 on August 29, 2018; lots of volatility with crash multiple times in the quarter; finally ending at 36,227 on September 30; so are the global markets; **Oil price** going up and **Rupee falling** to 70 against US Dollar cause macro-economic instability

Indian IT Companies

- **Top 5 Indian IT companies' headcount goes past a million** as of June 30, 2018 (based on the quarterly results published in August 2018); **TCS** with 400,875; **Infosys** with 209,905; **Wipro** with 164,659; **HCL** with 124,121; and, **TechMahindra** with 113,552!
- **Wipro** creates history by bagging \$ 1.5 Billion order from **Alight Solutions**, the first ever order of more than \$ 1 Billion for Wipro, on September 1, 2018
- **TCS** announces quarterly results for April June 2018 quarter on July 10, 2018, with the **highest growth in 15 quarters**; wins Rs 500 Crores order from **Thomson-Reuters** on September 15, 2018; its **market capitalization** goes past **\$ 8 Lakh Crores** on September 3, 2018; starts conducting online examination for recruitment of 26,502 positions of locomotive pilots' job for Indian Railways on August 9, 2018; the number of applicants is a whopping 47,56,000!
- **HCL** clocks a turnover of \$ 2.05 Billion in April to June 2018 quarter; with this HCL threatens to take India's No 3 position in the Indian IT services industry long occupied by Wipro
- **Infosys** gets \$ 700 Million order from Verizon on September 15, 2018; announces **muted results** on July 13, 2018; announces \$ 750 Crores investment in NOIDA facility with 5,000 seats in July 2018
- **PayTM** goes to Japan thru Japanese PayPay in July 2018
- **FlipKart** launches store for refurbished items **2GUD** in August 22, 2018
- **Ramco** announces partnership with **Microsoft** on cloud-based HR solutions on August 28, 2018; its **aviation suite** gets huge order from USA on September 24, 2018

Global IT Companies in India

- **Wal-Mart** completes acquisition of **FlipKart** in August 20, 2018
- **Vodafone Idea merger** gets the final approval on August 31, 2018 creating the largest telecom company **Vodafone Idea** in India with more than 400 million customers; September 3, 2018 is the Day 1 of the new entity
- **Uber** announces its **billionth ride in South Asia**; happens to be a ride booked at 1:16 AM of 26th July in Bengaluru, the city Uber started India operations, five years back!
- On July 9, 2018, **Samsung** commissions the **world's largest mobile phone assembly plant** with capacity to produce 120 million mobile phones in NOIDA (near Delhi) with Rs 5,000 Crores investment; launches the **largest mobile store** in Bangalore on September 11, 2018
- **Amazon** invests another Rs 2,100 Crores in India operations in August 2018
- The iconic furniture brand **IKEA** opens its **first store** in Hyderabad in August 2018
- **OnePlus** announces its planned R&D Center in India in July 2018
- **Continental** announces its expansion in India in August 2018 with addition of 1,000 more professionals
- **Aruba** (Part of HPE) decides to "Make in India" with local manufacturing of networking gear

Telecom

- **T-Mobile** places the largest ever **5G order** worth \$ 3.5 Billion on **Nokia** in early August 2018
- **Vodafone Idea** starts operations from August 31, 2018
- Indian government announces **New Telecom Policy** on July 11, 2018; Net Neutrality is upheld

- **BSNL** starts offering **Net Telephony** (reaching any telephone from BSNL App Wings) on July 11, 2018 (said to be the first in India)
- **Reliance Jio** announces the launches of Gigabit fiber service **Jio GigaFiber** from August 15, 2018 to customers in 1,100 towns in India

People

- The award winners of **Bhatnagar Prize** 2018 announced on September 26, 2018 includes Dr Nitin Saxena (Theoretical Computer Science) of IITK, Dr Ashwin Gumaste (Telecom Networks) of IITB and Dr Amit Kumar (Algorithms) of IITD; **Times World University rankings 2019** announced on September 25, 2018 has **Indian Institute of Science** in the Top 300
- India-born, Australia educated Stanford Professor Dr **Akshay Venkatesh** wins **Fields Medal** (Nobel for Mathematics) given to a maximum of four mathematicians of less than forty years of age) on August 1, 2018
- **South Korea's President** visits India in July and launches Samsung's mobile manufacturing unit in NOIDA, said to be the largest facility in the world
- Chennai-born **Indra Nooyi** announced her decision to step down as **CEO of PepsiCo** on August 12, 2018, after a 12-year stint
- Dr **Satheesh Reddy** takes charge as DRDO Chief on August 25, 2018
- Oracle global products head **Thomas Kurien** who grew up in Bangalore, steps down on September 27, 2018
- 18-year old Hima Das of Assam creates history by winning Gold in the women's 400 M gold at the world's under-20 athletic championship on July 12, 2018, the first ever win in track events for an Indian; Twelve Thai boys and their football coach miraculously rescued by a global team on July 11, 2018 with amazing use of technology (that includes special pumps from Kirloskar in Pune)
- Indian American **Seema Nanda** becomes the **CEO of Democratic National Committee**, the organization that runs one of the two political parties in USA, namely, the Democratic Party, in August 2018
- **Pakistan gets a new elected** Government with cricketer **Imran Khan** as Prime Minister on August 11, 2018
- Former **Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee** passed away on August 16, 2018; former **Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan** passed away on August 18, 2018
- **ISRO scientist Dr Nambi Narayanan** freed of spying charges by Supreme Court of India on September 17, 2018 ending 25-years of torture

Education & Research

- On July 9, 2018, Government of India announce the **Institutes of Eminence** list with three in the **Government sector** – **Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, IIT Delhi** and **IIT Bombay** and three in the Private sector – **BITS Pilani, Manipal Academy of Higher Learning** and the yet to be established **Jio University**

Start-up scene

- With \$ 800 Million funding on September 26, 2018 funding from SoftBank, India-based hotel-room aggregator **Oyo** is worth **\$ 5 Billion!**
- IIT-Delhi incubated logistics focused Robotics company **GreyOrange** starts US operations in August 2018
- Bangalore-based Taxi aggregator **Ola** starts **UK operation** in August 2018
- **Wal-Mart Labs India** acquires **Appsfly** on September 3, 2018
- **Routematic** (App-based office commute service) grows its Bangalore operation in September 2018
- **UiPath** (RPA vendor) gets \$ 225 Million funding in September 2018
- Engineering major **Greaves** acquires Hemalatha Annamalai founded Coimbatore-based electrical 2-wheeler manufacturer **Ampere** on August 31, 2018

Infrastructure

- **Sikkim** gets its **Airport** on September 25, 2018; the 100th commercial Airport in India brings air connectivity to ALL the States of India
- Indian Railways & Google partnership takes free Wi-Fi to more nearly 400 Railway stations; through another partnership, **Google** chronicles the 150 years history through "**Indian Railways – lifeline of a Nation**", Rail Heritage project on September 29, 2018

General

- **India** becomes the **6th global economy** as per IMF, based on 2017 GDP of \$ 2.59 Trillion (USA with 19.4 T, China with 12.2 T, Japan with 4.87 T, Germany with \$ 3.67 T and UK with \$ 2.62 T are ahead). France with \$ 2.58 B is the 7th; Brazil (8th), Italy (9th) and Canada (10th) are the other Top Ten economies of the world

- **GST** completes one year on July 1, 2018, with more benefits and less problems, so far
- **Tata steel is 150 years old** in September 2018
- **India Post Payment Bank** becomes operational on September 1, 2018
- Viral **WhatsApp message** destroys **Infibeam**'s market value by 70% on a single day on September 28, 2018
- **All India Radio** is available **Alexa** in **14 Indian languages** from September 29, 2018
- **Indonesian Tsunami** kills nearly 800 people in September 2018; **Floods in Kerala** causes havoc in August 2018 with significant loss of lives and property

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Points to Ponder

Anybody who is too much stressed or confused should read this again and again.....I got all my answers. Try this.

A rare conversation between Krishna & Today's Arjun. Read it aloud to family, it's one of the best message I have come across...

Arjun: I can't find free time. Life has become hectic.

Krishna: Activity gets you busy. But productivity gets you free.

Arjun: Why has life become complicated now?

Krishna: Stop analyzing life... It makes it complicated. Just live it.

Arjun: Why are we then constantly unhappy?

Krishna: Worrying has become your habit. That's why you are not happy.

Arjun: Why do good people always suffer?

Krishna: Diamond cannot be polished without friction. Gold cannot be purified without fire. Good people go through trials, but don't suffer. With that experience their life becomes better, not bitter.

Arjun: You mean to say such experience is useful?

Krishna: Yes. In every term, Experience is a hard teacher. It gives the test first and the lessons later.

Arjun: Because of so many problems, we don't know where we are heading...

Krishna: If you look outside you will not know where you are heading. Look inside. Eyes provide sight. Heart provides the way.

Arjun: Does failure hurt more than moving in the right direction?

Krishna: Success is a measure as decided by others. Satisfaction is a measure as decided by you.

Arjun: In tough times, how do you stay motivated?

Krishna: Always look at how far you have come rather than how far you have to go. Always count your blessing, not what you are missing.

Arjun: What surprises you about people?

Krishna: When they suffer they ask, "why me?" When they prosper, they never ask "Why me?"

Arjun: How can I get the best out of life?

Krishna Face your past without regret. Handle your present with confidence. Prepare for the future without fear.

Arjun: One last question. Sometimes I feel my prayers are not answered.

Krishna There are no unanswered prayers. Keep the faith and drop the fear. Life is a mystery to solve, not a problem to resolve. Trust me. Life is wonderful if you know how to live.

Stay blessed and Stay Happy Always.....!!!