What’s hot in IT - An Indian Perspective

Prof. S. Sadagopan
Director, IIIT-Bangalore
ss@iiitb.ac.in

May 2019

Universities, Science & Technology, Policy, Special events and Milestones

- IISc researchers claim super-conductivity at room temperature on May 27, 2019
- Engineering college seats approved by AICTE drop from 28.71 Lakhs in 2017-18 to 27.12 Lakhs in 2018-19; for 2019-20 it will drop further to 24.92 Lakhs!
- SpaceX launched its first set of 60 satellites (of the 12,000 planned over 6 years) on May 23, 2019 to provide Internet connectivity
- ISRO successfully launches RISAT-2B Radar Imaging satellite on May 22, 2019
- After its first successful test flight on May 4, 2019 in Munich, Lilium starts 5-seater Air taxi with 300 KM range electric plane on May 16, 2019, a revolution in passenger flight
- US President imposes $ 200 Billion duty on Chinese imports on May 9, 2019; China retaliates and hikes duty on most US goods from June 1, 2019; technology war hots up on May 20, 2019 ith Google restricting Android access o Huawei; Intel, QUALCOMM getting forced to restrict supply / sourcing of components to / from China
- Indian Parliamentary Elections saw Narendra Modi led NDA coming to power on May 23, 2019 with a thumping majority
- Shoot-out in USA kills dozen people on May 31, 2019; fire in Surat Coaching Center kills dozen people on May 30, 2019; Super cyclone Fani causes extensive damage to life and property in Odisha on May 3 and West Bengal & Bangladesh on May 4, 2019: thankfully, there was minimum loss of lives thanks to extensive planning and coordination by the State governments and Central government

Products

- Greaves Cotton launches electric scooter Ampere Zeal for Indian markets on May 28, 2019; it is priced at Rs 66,950 (after Rs 18,000 subsidy from Government under FAME II Policy)
- Apple launches iPod (priced at $ 199) after four years on May 28, 2019
- OnePlus launches 7 Pro in Bangalore on May 20, 2019
- NOKIA launches Nokia 4.2 in India priced @ Rs 10,000 on May 10, 2019
- Google announces Pixel 3 phone on May 10, 2010 (part of multiple announcements during Google I/O)

Markets

- India’s stock market index Sensex touches 39,593 on Exit Polls predicting NDA victory on May 20, 2019 and went past 40,000 on NDA victory on May 23, 2019; Rupee gained nearly a Rupee on May 20, 2019
- HPE acquires Cray (the only company focused exclusively on super computers, founded by super computer pioneer Seymour Cray) on May 18, 2019
- Uber IPO is finally through in May 6, 2019; priced at $ 45 Uber raises $ 8.1 Billion, but loses value on the very first day of trading! In fact, created history by way of losing the maximum on Day 1 among all IPO’s post 1975!

Indian IT Companies

- Mindtree starts delivery center in Atlanta in USA in May 2019
- TCS is No 1 most-valued Indian company bypassing Reliance on May 5, 2019
- With 2018-19 turnover of $ 8.6 Billion HCL is No. 3 Indian IT Services company (next to TCS and Infosys) bypassing Wipro with 2018-19 turnover of $ 8.1 Billion
MNC IT Companies in India

- Goldman Sachs starts a new delivery center in Bangalore with 1.25 Million square feet space to host 7,300 people at a cost of $250 Million on May 30, 2019 (it will be the third center globally for GS)
- Swiss Bank UBS hired 1,900 people in India in 2018-19 as per its May 2019 Report
- Texas Instruments (TI) gets approval from Government for an additional R & D facility in Bangalore in May 2019; the near Rs 1,000 Crore facility near International Airport will house 2,000 engineers. TI was the first MNC to bet on India with a facility in Bangalore set up way back in 1985!
- MasterCard to invest $1 Billion over the next years in India as per May 6, 2019 announcement
- AI driven Analytics firm based of Silicon Valley ThoughtSpot to invest $25 Million in Bangalore R & D center as per May announcement
- Fintech start-up Samco commissions its Rs 20 Crore R&D Center in Chennai in May 2019

People

- Narendra Modi takes oath as India’s Prime Minister for a second time on May 30, 2019
- UK Prime Minister Theresa May announces her decision to step down in June on May 24, 2019
- US Billionaire pays off students loan for 400 students on May 20, 2019
- Wal-Mart International CEO Judith McKenna visits FlipKart Bangalore supply chain centre during May 2-3, 2019
- Japanese new Emperor Naruhito is sworn in on May 1, 2019 (Emperor Akihito abdicated his power on April 30, 2019)
- Yogi Deveshwar who transformed ITC from a cigarette company into an FMCG biggie over 25 years, passed away on May 11, 2019

Start-up Scene

- FlipKart set to acquire Namdhari in May 2019

Interesting applications

- RBI (Reserve Bank of India) extends the window of operations for RTGS by another 90 minutes (430 PM to 6 pm) from June 1, 2019 by facilitating online payments over longer period

Interesting numbers

- Reliance Industries with annual 2018-19 turnover of Rs 6.23 Lakhs Crores is bigger than Indian Oil with Rs 6.17 Crores, the first time ever!
- GST collection for May is stagnant at Rs 1 Lakh Crores

General

- Narendra Modi led NDA coming to power with 300+ seats on May 23, 2019 creates history; the first Prime Minister after Nehru & Indira Gandhi to get a second term as Prime Minister. Congress Party (Grand Old Party of India) continues to suffer with miniscule size of 52 seats!

April 2019

Universities, Science & Technology, Policy, Special events and Milestones

- JEE Main results out on April 29, 2019 (ahead of time)
- Professor Gagandeep Kang of Translational Health Science & Technology Institute, Faridabad, Delhi is the first Indian woman to become a Fellow of the Royal Society on April 20, 2019
- NIRF 2019 rankings out on April 8, 2019; IITM and IISc top the list; IITM, IITD, IITB, IITKGP & IITK are the Top 5 Engineering Institutes; IISc, JNU, BHU, UoH and Calcutta University are Top 5 Universities; IITM, IISc, IITD, IITB & IITKGP are the overall Top 5
- UC Berkeley Professor and IITK Alum Professor Jitendra Malik named 2019 IEEE Computer Society's Computer Pioneer award winner on April 2, 2019
- IIT-KGP Alumnus and IITB faculty Dr Subhasis Chaudhury takes charge as IIT - Bombay Director on April 15, 2019
- MIT visualization scientist could share the first-ever picture of a black hole on April 10, 2019
- Korea becomes the first country to start offering 5G services commercially on three networks in Korea starting April 2019; Samsung S10 5G is the first device to offer the service
• **Air India server breakdown** for six hours (330 AM to 930 AM on April 27, 2019) leads to several hours of wait for thousands of passengers across the globe

• **Japanese Emperor** abdicates power on **April 30, 2019**; the **new Emperor** is anointed on May 1, 2019

• **Sensex** touches 39,000 on April 28, 2019

• **Microsoft** market capitalization touches **$ 1 Trillion** on April 25, 2019

• Crude oil price shoots past **$ 75** per barrel on April 25, 2019

• **Bajaj quadri-cycle** finally reaches Indian roads on April 18, 2019

• **Terrorist attack in Sri Lanka** on Easter Sunday kills hundreds on April 21, 2019

• **Jet Airways operations** come to a **grinding halt** on April 17, 2019

• Fire damages the 850-year old historic Notre Dame cathedral in France on April 16, 2019; global efforts to restore the monument takes off in a big way

• **Indian Parliamentary Elections** off to a good start on April 12, 2019; to end on May 19, 2019 with results on May 23, 2019

• **Gmail** turned 15 on April 1, 2019

• RBI cuts Repo rate by 0.25% on April 4, 2019; Maruti will stop selling Diesel cars from April 1, 2010

**Markets**

• Markets ended high by the end of the financial year 2018-19 with BSE touching 39,000 and **NSE** touching 11,500 by March 31, 2019 (the last day of trading) representing 9% increase over the year

• **Mindtree** joins the “**billion dollar club**” on April 17, 2019

• **L & T Infotech** hostile take-over of Mindtree continues to draw attention in April too

**Indian IT Companies**

• **Mindtree** joins the “**billion dollar club**” on April 17, 2019

• **TCS & Infosys** post good results for Q4 and the financial year 2019-20 on April 12, 2019; TCS revenue crosses **$ 20 Billion**; Infosys revenue crosses **$ 11 Billion**

• **Wipro** posts **38% growth** in Q4 profits; announce buyback of Rs 10,400 Cr

**MNC IT Companies in India**

• **ThoughtSpot** (US-based AI & analytics company) announces its decision to invest **$ 25 Million** in Bangalore center

**People**

• **Wal-Mart CEO** visits India during April 15-16, 2019

• **IIT-KGP Alumnus and IITB faculty Dr Subasis Chaudhury** takes charge as **IIT - Bombay** Director on April 15, 2019

• Government of India’s experiment of lateral induction of talent in government fructifies with five joint secretaries appointed on April 12, 2019

• **Kanishak Kataria**, IITB Alum, is No 1 in Indian Civil Services Exam (results were out on April 8, 2019)!

• **David Malpass** was named the **13th World Bank President** on April 5, 2019

• **Keshav Murugesh** and **Praveen Rao** are **Chair** and **Vice Chair** of **NASSCOM** for FY 2019-20 (starting April 1, 2019)

**Start-up Scene**

• Leading RPA (Robotic Process Automation) vendor **UiPath** gets **$ 568 Million fund infusion** on April 28, 2019

• **BookMyShow** invests in Pune-based payments start-up **AtomX** in April 2019

• **Dream11** (Mumbai-based fantasy sports company) is the latest Unicorn (with investment from Steadview Capital on April 9, 2019) that too with just 220 employees!

• **Airbnb** to invest up to **$ 200 Billion** in **Oyo** starting April 2019

**Interesting numbers**

• **GST** collection for March Rs 1.06 Lakh Crores, the largest ever

• **Sensex** crosses 39,000 for the first time ever on April 1, 2019

**General**

• **Gaana** reaches **100 million** monthly users in April 2019
• **BoB (Bank of Baroda)** becomes the third largest Indian Bank (after SBI and HDFC) with the merger of Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank on April 1, 2019; the transition was fairly smooth for millions of customers

**March 2019**

**Universities, Science & Technology, Policy, Special events and Milestones**

• AI pioneers **Yoshua Benigo** (Univ. of Montreal), **Geoffrey Hinton** (Univ. of Toronto) and **Yann LeCun** (New York Univ.) win **Turing Award** (the Nobel Prize in Computing) on March 28, 2019

• **Abel Prize 2019** goes to Norwegian woman (the first time ever for a woman) Prof. Karen Uhlenbeck of UT Austin

• **India** successfully demonstrates capability to shoot down Low Earth Orbit satellite, joining an elite club - the 4th Nation with such capability

• Google and Facebook suffer outage lasting several hours in March 2019

• **Election Commission** announces date of **General Elections to the 17th Parliament** on March 10, 2019; April 11 to May 19 are the election days and with May 23, 2019 is the day of counting!

• **UIDAI** decision to charge Rs 20 per eKYC transaction on March 9, 2019 to upset the apple-cart of Fintech companies

• **Supreme Court** appoints **mediation council** to find a solution within 8 weeks for the vexed **Ayodhya problem** on March 7, 2019

• **US Senate** votes **to end local emergency** in US Southern border on March 14, 2019

• **WWW** turns 30 in March 2019

• **Wikipedia** turns 18 on March 12, 2019

• **Kirloskar Industries** turns 100 in March 2019

• **British Parliament** votes to delay Brexit on March 13, 2019; Prime Minister Theresa May suffers another loss of vote on March 29, 2019; BRExit is in deep trouble

• Mozambique storm, Plane crash, New Zealand bombing, Mumbai bridge collapse and Dharwad building collapse cause lots of human misery in March 2019

**Products**

• **Apple** launches **TV App, News and Credit Card** on Mar 25, 2019 in an exclusive event in SFO

• **Google** launches Google Music App in India on March 12, 2019

• **Google Bolo App** launched in India on March 6, 2019, targeting rural children

• **Galaxy S-10** and **S10+** launched by **Samsung** in India on March 6, 2019

**Markets**

• Markets ended high by the end of the financial year 2018-19 with BSE touching 39,000 and NSE touching 11,500 by March 31, 2019 (the last day of trading) representing 9% increase over the year

• **L & T Infotech** hostile take-over of Mindtree kept March alive

• **Japanese Murta** picks up stakes in Coimbatore-based **Versa** on March 10, 2019

• **Arcelor-Mittal** wins bid for **Essar Steel** on March 9, 2019

• **NVIDIA** acquires chip maker **Mellanox** for $ 4.9 Billion on March 8, 2019

**Indian IT Companies**

• **Infosys** buys 75% stake in **Stater** – an ABN AMRO subsidiary – for $ 130 million on March 29, 2019

• **HCL** signs contract worth $ 1.3 Billion with **Xerox** on March 1, 2019

• **Infosys** gets **Rolls Royce** contract on March 7, 2019

• **Kirloskar turns 100** in March 2019

**MNC IT Companies in India**

• **Google Pay** expands to 200,000 merchants in India in March 2019, thanks to **PineLabs** and **Innoviti**

**People**

• IIT-KGP Alumnus and IITB faculty Dr **Subasis Chaudhury** named **IITB Director**

• **Premji’s philanthropy** touches Rs 100,000 Crores in March 2019

• **Mukesh Ambani** enters the global Top 10 Richest list in March 2019
Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal steps down from the Board on March 25, 2019 after 27 years as Chairman; Bank Consortium led by SBI take 51% control

Ghose is the new Lokpal!

Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar passed away on March 17, 2019; an IIT Bombay Alum and a humane person he was Goa Chief Minister four times and Union Defence Minister

Subhash Garg is the new Finance Secretary from March 9, 2019

Adhiya is the Chairman for BoB (Bank of Baroda); assumes special significance as Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank are said to merge into BoB on April 1, 2018

Start-up Scene

Miracle of South Korea invests $ 150 Million in BigBasket; with their valuation BigBasket turns Unicorn!

Blockchain start-up “New Street Tech” gets Rs 14 Cr funding on March 25, 2019

Ola Cabs gets its license revoked on March 21, 2019; gets back its license after paying Rs 15 L fine on Mar 25, 2019

90 Start-ups get Angel tax exemption on March 20, 2019

PineLabs acquires Quikcilver for $ 110 Million on March 19, 2019

Hyundai & Kia Motors invest $ 300 Million in Ola Cabs on March 12, 2019

Zoho acquires ePoise on March 8, 2019

Cognizant acquires MeritSoft on March 5, 2019

Interesting applications

Multi-modal transport card Swagat launched on March 4, 2019

General

Several governments around the world, including Indian Government, decide to ground Boeing 737 Max planes in March 2019; Boeing sees $ 42 Billion loss of market capitalization on a single day on March 13, 2019

Ethiopian Airlines crash leaves 171 dead (including 4 Indians) on March 8, 2019

For the third year in a row, Indore is the cleanest city in India

About the author: Professor Sowmyanarayanan Sadagopan (ss@iiitb.ac.in) is the Director of IIIT-Bangalore. These are his personal views. He has been writing on “What’s Hot in IT” from an Indian perspective continuously from 1997; Times of India, Financial Express, IT Magazine carried the monthly (and yearly columns) till 2016; IEEE India has been carrying the quarterly columns since 2017