

What's hot in IT - An Indian Perspective



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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 with **Google** restricting Android access to **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, 2019 (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 **Namdharis** 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
- Google abandons AI Ethics board on April 3, 2019

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

- **Mirace** 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 **Quiksilver** 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

