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IT in January 2015

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General

- President Obama's India visit during January 25-27, 2015 and participating as the Chief Guest on the Republic Day on January 26, 2015 creates history
- Government sets up NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog on January 1, 2015 replacing the erstwhile Planning Commission; the renowned Columbia University Professor of Economics Dr. Arvind Panagariya is the Vice Chairman (Prime Minister being the Chairman); IAS Officer Mrs. Sindhushri Khullar is the CEO
- Vibrant Gujarat 2015 (January 11-13, 2015) saw UN Secretary General Ban Moon, US Secretary of State John Kerry and World Bank President attend the event in Ahmedabad; many global CEO's commit billions of dollars of investment in India in the year 2015
- Kalidasa Satyarthi gives away Nobel Prize Medallion to the Nation; Prize Medallion available for public view in Rashtrapati Bhawan in Delhi; decided to give away all of Prize money to children
- Delhi Elections announced on January 12, 2015; Poll on February 7, 2015 and results on February 10, 2015; NRI get voting rights!
- Jammu & Kashmir Elections throws up fractured mandate forcing President's Rule on January 9, 2015
- Trade deficit hits 10-month low thanks to falling oil price
- Brent crude drops below \$ 50 on January 7, 2015 the first time after the year 2009
- Paris terror attack on January 7, 2015 kills 12; the world rallies against terror through a massive Paris March with 250,000 people on January 11, 2015
- Government decides not to appeal against High Court verdict on Vodafone improving investor confidence

Technology

- **Agni V** (missile) test fired successfully by DRDO on January 31, 2015

Markets

- **BSE Sensex** touches 29,000 for the first time on January 23, 2015; earlier in the month it also saw a fall of 855 points on January 6, 2015
- RBI cuts **Repo rate** by 0.25% on January 14, 2015 leading to rally in the markets on 14th January 2015; Sensex and Nifty show record spurt
- **Apple** posts **record profit** of \$ 18 billion profit (highest ever for any corporation) on January 28, 2015 for October-December 2014 quarter

- Chinese Billionaire Alibaba Founder Jack Ma announces his decision to invest \$ 550 million in **PayTM** in January 2015; Delhi-based Vijay Shekhar Sharma founded Start-up **PayTM** operates in retail payments and e-commerce space; the company is expected to see billion dollar value soon
- Hyderabad-based IT services company with focus on engineering services **Cyient** acquires 74% stake in **Rangsons Electronics** for ₹ 360 crores on January 2, 2015
- **Commonfloor** (software as a service provider for apartment owners' associations) acquires Bangalore-based retail social networking company **Bakfy** on January 6, 2015
- **Hike** (India's instant-messaging App) buys US-based Anuj Jain founded phone calling company **Zip Phone** on January 8, 2015
- **TechMahindra** acquires Geneva-based transformation banking company **SOFGEN** on January 9, 2015
- India-based Zomato buys US-based **Urbanspoon** for ₹ 360 crores on January 12, 2015
- **Twitter** buys Bangalore-based **ZipDial** (started by Stanford Undergrad student Valerie Wagoner who was with mChek) for \$ 40 million on January 13, 2015
- **Mindtree** buys US-based **Discoverture** for \$ 15 million on January 18, 2015
- **Expedia** buys rival **Travelocity** for \$ 280 million on January 22, 015
- **Harman** International (German audio major of JBL fame) buys **Symphony Teleca** (owned by India-born Romesh Wadhvani) for \$ 780 million on January 23, 2015
- **Spicejet** ownership moves from **Marans** to **Ajay Singh** on January 30, 2015
- **Coal India** 10% stake sales yield ₹ 22,000 crores to Government of India on January 30, 2015

Products

- CES (Consumer Electronics Show) attracts many unusual product launches during January 6-10, 2015
- **XiaomiRedMiNote** at ₹ 9,999 launched exclusively on Airtel on January 1, 2015: announces XiaomiMi Note that is said to challenge iPhone 6 on January 19, 2015 in India
- **Ramco** Systems rolls out **SMS-based ESS**
- **Samsung** launches its first **Tizen powered phones** in India on January 15, 2015
- **HDFC** launches **digital wallet** on January 15, 2015
- **Lenovo 4G** smart phone **A6000** that was announced on CES in early January launched in India on January 16, 2015 at ₹ 6,999, the best value at its price
- **IBM** unveils **Z13 servers** (mainframe computers) in India on January 19, 2015
- **Microsoft** showcases **Windows 10** on January 21, 2015 including HoloLens 3D, new Browser (replacing Internet Explorer) and other products
- **Apple** iPhone launched by **Vodafone** along with billing plan bundles on January 21, 2015
- **Asus** launches its low cost Laptop **EeeBook X205** weighing less than 1 kg at an attractive price of ₹ 14,999 on January 21, 2015

- **HP** launches low-cost **Streamlaptops** for ₹ 18,000 onwards on January 23, 2015
- **Microsoft** offers **MS Office** free on Android Tablets on January 29, 2015
- **E-Mail** sees many actions in January 2015; **Microsoft** launches **Outlook** EMail App (re-hash of **Accompli** that was acquired by Microsoft earlier) on iPhone; **gMail** (from Google), **iPhone** (from Apple) and **Outlook** (from Microsoft) offer the best service, device and experience for E-Mail; **Amazon** announces the launch of **WorkMail** on January 29, 2015

Indian IT companies

- With capital infusion from Alibaba and Temasek, **Paytm** is near billion dollar value (faster than Flipkart and Snapdeal even)
- **TCS** September - December quarter profit at ₹ 5,444 crores (even higher than Reliance Industries) and turnover at ₹ 24,501 crores; TCS to power Virgin Atlantic software solutions
- **Infosys** posts good results for October - December 2014 quarter on January 9, 2015 in the very first full quarter after Vishal Sikka took charge
- **Wipro** bags \$ 400 million order from **ABB** on January 7, 2015; wins Rs 900 Crores contract from **Allied Irish Banks** on January 25, 2015
- **Commonfloor** (software as a service provider for apartment owners' associations) acquires Bangalore-based retail social networking company **Bakfy** on January 6, 2015
- **Hike** (India's instant-messaging App) buys US-based Anuj Jain founded calling company **Zip Phone** on January 8, 2015
- **TechMahindra** acquires Geneva-based transformation banking company **SOFGEN** on January 9, 2015
- India-based **Zomato** buys US-based **UrbanSpoon** for ₹ 360 crores on January 12, 2015
- **Mindtree** buys US-based Discoverture for \$ 15 million on January 18, 2015
- **Taxiforsure** launches App-based service for autos on January 15, 2015
- **Ola** includes an SoS feature in its taxi hailing App in January 2015

MNC companies in India

- **Twitter** buys Bangalore-based **ZipDial** that created billion dollar business using "missed calls" (started by Stanford Undergrad student Valerie Wagoner who was with mChek) for \$ 40 million on January 13, 2015; it is the first buy for Twitter in India
- **Ford** decides to pilot **car pooling App** in India
- **Microsoft** starts Apps charging thru phone bills on **Idea**
- France-based **BlaBlaCar** (car pooling using Apps) enters India in January 2015
- Global auto major **Continental** to double R&D team in Bangalore from 1,000 to 1,900 in 5 years
- **GE** plans to invest ₹ 3,000 Crores in Maharashtra in India
- **CapGemini** starts their new Bangalore campus on January 20, 2015 and plans to hire 20,000 in the next 2 years; headcount in India will touch 70,000

- **Amazon** signs up for 1.3 million square feet space in World Tech Center in Bangalore in January 2015
- **Vodafone** holds its global Board meeting in India in January 2015
- **Xiaomi** announces its decision to set up first R&D facility in India in January 2015
- **Volkswagen** launches its engine plant in Chakan in Maharashtra on January 27, 2015 (100,000 per year engine capacity and Rs 240 Crores investment)

Education & Research

- Murthy Classical Indian Library (**MCLI**) launched on January 19, 2015; under this scheme Harvard University Press will bring out authentic, contemporary English language versions of ten classics from India (chosen from many Indian languages) every year; it is funded by Infosys founder NR Narayana Murthy's family

People

- **Vint Cerf** (Turing Award winner and father of TCP/IP Protocol) **Chief Scientist of Google** visits India in January 2015 and pledges support to Digital India project of the Prime Minister
- **AK Mittal** is the new **Railway Board Chairman** from January 1, 2015
- Sri Lanka sees **Sirisena** taking over as the new **President** on January 9, 2015
- Bangalore-born **Thomas Kurian** is one of the three **Oracle Presidents** on January 9, 2015
- **SindhushreeKhullar** (former Planning Secretary) is **NITI Aayog** (newly constituted Planning Commission) CEO from January 10, 2015
- Vibrant Gujarat 2015 (Jan 11-13) saw **UN Secretary General Ban Moon**, US Secretary of State John Kerry, **World Bank President** attend the event in Ahmedabad
- **Brahma** takes over as **Chief Election Commissioner** on January 16, 2015
- Fields Medal (Mathematics) Nobel) **winner** Prof **ManjulBhargava** launches MCLI in Bangalore on January 19, 2015
- **Kiran Bedi** joins BJP on January 16, 2015; chosen as Chief ministerial candidate on January 20, 2015
- **President Obama** visits India during 25-27 January 2015; was the Chief Guest of the Indian Republic Day on January 26, 2015
- **S Jaishankar** is the new **Foreign Secretary** effective January 29, 2015
- Noted **cartoonist R K Laxman** is no more (passed away on January 27, 2015)

Infrastructure

- **Vistara** (Airline joint venture of Tata and Singapore Airlines) starts operation on January 9, 2015 with its first flight from Delhi to Mumbai on January 9, 2015; to start more flights soon

Interesting Applications

- **ICICI Bank** introduces NFC-based proximity cards with new POS terminals for easy and faster card-based payments in January 2015
- Ford decides to pilot car pooling App in India
- Mobile wallet players PayTM, MobiKwik, Oxigen, Citrus have more customers than the total debit card user base of all banks in India!

- **Apple Pay** to go international soon
- **WhatsApp** on browser too from January 23, 2015
- **PMJY** wins Guinness Book of Record for record number of bank accounts opened in a very short time
- **IKaaz** Software launches open mobile wallet on January 23, 2015
- Indian Railways launch Android-based App **NTES** (National Train Enquiry System) on January 23, 2015
- airworldservice.org (All India Radio on the Web) goes operational with President Obama and PM Modi's "Mankibaat" program on January 27, 2015
- **Swalekh** App for Android from Reverie released on January 26, 2015 makes 15 Indian language scripts available on mobile phones
- **Magzter** launches subscription-based Magazine services (Rs 499 for unlimited Magazines) on Feb 1, 2015

Interesting numbers

- **Telecom subscriber** base on December 31, 2014 stood at 970.97 million with 943.97 million mobile subscribers and 27.00 million wire-line subscribers (with net addition of 6.92 million mobile subscribers and net reduction of 0.14 million wire-line subscribers in December 2014); of the 970.97 phone subscribers 572.29 were in urban area, while 398.68 were from rural area (TRAI Press Release No. 11/2015 dated February 6, 2015)
- **India's Foreign Exchange** on January 31, 2015 was at \$ 328 billion (RBI)
- **Indian Rupee** stood at 61.86 against USD on January 31, 2015 (RBI)
- On January 31, 2015 **BSE Sensex** and **NSE NIFTY 50** (Indian stock market indices) were at 28,183 and 8,809 respectively (Reuters)
- Oil tumbles to \$ 45 on January 13, 2015
- Mahindras roll out their 5 millionth vehicle in January 2015
- Flipkart talks of creating 10,000 millionaires in this decade
- TCS quarterly profits of ₹ 5,526 crores go past RIL profits (the highest for Indian private companies) on January 16, 2015
- 99.74% households have bank accounts in India today
- SBI HDFC in global 50 most valued global banks in terms of market capitalization
- Apple sells 74.47 million phones in September – December 2014 quarter; \$ 76 billion in sales \$ 18 billion in profit and \$ 178 billion in cash reserves
- Office space in eight Indian cities (Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai) increased by 32.5 Million square feet in 2014 (up from 25.35 Million in 2013) (as per Cushman & Wakefield)
- RBI permits Indians to invest up to \$ 250,000 annually outside India

