

What's hot in IT in 2019 An Indian Perspective

Major developments of the year

- **ISRO** with its 99% success of **Chandrayaan II**
- The launch of **Samsung Fold phones** in the year (many others following in **2020**)
- **BSE** going from 36,000 to 42,000 in the year
- **TCS** creating history
- Hostile take-over of **Mindtree** by **L&T InfoTech**
- Launch of **Reliance Jio Fiber**
- Nobel Prize winner **Abhijit Banerjee** with India connection



- **Prime Minister Modi** in his historic US visit “**Howdy Modi**” and his address in UN Assembly & US Congress
- Several **Supreme Court** rulings including **AADHAAR** related issues, **Ayodhya** case finally getting solved
- Supreme Court ruling in **Vodafone** case, telecom companies in dire financial circumstances, banks not lending enough, **ILFS** crisis, dramatic economic **slow-down**
- **BJP** winning an absolute majority and returning to power in May, yet having a series of debacles in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Jharkhand; CAA, NRC, NPR confusion all of December!

- The tragic death of **Café Coffee Day** founder VG **Siddhartha**
- Three senior BJP leaders **Manohar Parikkar** (Goa CM), **Sushma Swaraj** (External Affairs Minister) and **Arun Jaitley** (Finance Minister) within months

- **Apple & Goldman Sachs** launching a **virtual card** (in the crowded credit / debit card space)
- **Aramco IPO**
- **US China friction** in trade; **Huawei** winning 5G orders yet not getting the sales thru due to trade war between US & China
- **Social media** related human misery – fake news & loss of privacy

- **President Trump** getting formally **impeached**
- **Brexit** going thru its up & downs with UK PM Theresa May stepping down, Boris Johnson winning but deciding to go for another election and winning back – all in a year

Markets

➤ On the IPO scene

- Indian Railways PSU **IRCTC IPO** on October 14, 2019 got oversubscribed 110 times! Stock price gained 29% on Day 1

➤ Globally,

- Saudi Oil major **Aramco** created history with its **IPO** becoming the largest ever IPO on **December 4, 2019**; on Day 2 of its listing, its market value touched \$ **2 Trillion** surpassing the market value of **Apple**, **Microsoft** and **Google**.
- **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, it created history by way of losing the maximum on Day 1 among all IPO's post 1975!

➤ On the acquisition front,

- **L & T Infotech** hostile take-over of **Mindtree** got a lot of attention; it finally concluded in **October 2019**

➤ Globally,

- In semi-conductor industry, **Infineon** buys **Cypress Semiconductors** for a whopping \$ 10 Billion on June 5, 2019, one of the largest acquisitions; **NVIDIA** acquires chip maker **Mellanox** for \$ 4.9 Billion on March 8, 2019
- **HPE** acquires **Cray** (the only company focused exclusively on super computers, founded by super computer pioneer Seymour Cray) on May 18, 2019
- **Google** acquires the wearables company **FitBit** for \$ 2.1 Billion on November 1, 2019 and the analytics start-up **Looker** for \$ 2.6 Billion on June 6, 2019
- **Salesforce** acquires the analytics biggie **Tableau** for \$ 15.3 Billion on **June 10, 2019**
- **Dassault Systems** buys **Medidata** for \$ 5.7 Billion on June 12, 2019
- **United Technologies** and **Raytheon** merge on June 10, 2019 to create a huge \$ 120 Billion defence contractor
- **Amazon India** and **Flipkart Big Billion Days** Shopping Festival in September & October 2019 saw big increase in sales in an otherwise damp market condition
- BSE Index **Sensex** had moved from 36,000 to 42,000 over the year; it jumped 1,800 point increase on September 20, 2019, following Finance Minister's announcement of corporate tax reduction (the highest single-day gain in a decade); and went past 40,000 on NDA victory on May 23, 2019; had a huge fall in September and recovered in December
- **Wall Street** had a remarkable year with **Dow Jones Index** crossing **28,000** for the first time in **December 2019**



MNC IT Companies in India

- **Samsung India** is a \$ 10 Billion company on **December 1, 2019**
- With 9,100 **patents** in 2018 (with more than 4,000 patents in AI), **IBM** continues its record of holding the No 1 position for 26 years; interestingly, 800 of them were from IBM India, the largest for IBM outside USA
- **Google** announces the starting of **Google AI Research Lab in India**; **Google Pay** expands to 200,000 merchants in India in **March 2019**, thanks to **PineLabs** and **Innoviti**
- Several global majors increased their operations in India in the **year 2019**. This include

- **Google** signs up for **450,000 square feet** office space with **Simpli Work** in Gurgaon on **December 12, 2019**
- **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)
- **Amazon** leases **1.3 Million square** feet office space in Bangalore in June 2019
- **Samsung R & D Institute** signing up for another 4,00,000 sq. ft. space in Bangalore on **February 16, 2019**
- French major **Thales** launches its R & D Center in Bangalore in February 2019,

- “**Make in India**” seems to be taking off

- **Apple** started selling **iPhone XR** units **made in India** and even exports to other countries from Chennai plant owned by its supplier Foxconn
- **Xiaomi** supplier **Holitech** invests \$ 200 Million in NOIDA plant in UP in North India; production expected to start as early as Q3 of this year

- **Siemens Healthineers** starts a **medical device manufacturing facility** in Electronics City in Bangalore on **September 19, 2019**



Indian IT companies

➤ **TCS creates history**

- On June 9, 2019, with 417,929 employees (as per Wikipedia), **TCS market capitalization (\$ 120.5 Billion) is higher** than that of legendary IT leader **IBM (\$ 119.6 Billion)**. Interestingly, TCS had a turnover of \$ 21 Billion for FY 19 and \$ 4.5 Billion profit, while IBM with 3,50,600 employees (as per Wikipedia) had a much larger \$ 79.6 Billion turnover and \$ 8.7 Billion profit and for the same period; its brand **value** takes it to global No 3 (next only to **Accenture & IBM**) as per Brand Finance Report of January 23, 2019; TCS bags \$ 2 Billion order from Europe's largest pension funds consolidator **Phoenix** group on **November 12, 2019**

- **Mindtree** joins the “**billion dollar club**” on April 17, 2019; however, as an independent company, it becomes history after L&T acquisition in July
- **L&T InfoTech makes news! Mindtree saga is over!** L&T is officially the promoter of **Mindtree** effective July 3, 2019 as its holdings cross 60% on that day.

- 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; **HCL** signs contract worth \$ 1.3 Billion with **Xerox** on **March 1, 2019**

- **Bajaj** re-launches an Electric version of its historic “**Chetak**” scooter in October 2019
- **Cognizant** decides to **lay off 350 Senior Management personnel** to cut costs on **December 23, 2019**



Products

- The one product that was truly revolutionary in the year 2019 was **Samsung Galaxy Fold launched on February 20, 2019** at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, the place where Steve Jobs launched Apple II way back in 1977; after initial glitch, Samsung Galaxy Fold had a spectacular launch in **September 2019**; 1,600 **Samsung Fold Phones** were sold in 3 minutes in India!
- There were interesting **Smart TV** launches in India in the year 2019; they include **Nokia TV** launched with **FlipKart** (Wal-Mart owned) on **December 12, 2019** (**55” TV at Rs 41,999**)! **Amazon Fire TV**, in partnership with **ONIDA** in **December 2019** and **OnePlus TV** in **September 2019**



- **Apple** launched its **virtual card** on **August 6, 2019** (along with **Goldman Sachs**); it is creating ripples in the established credit card market; other products launched by **Apple** in the year include **iPhone 11**, **Apple tv+** and a new **iPad** version in **September 10, 2019**; upgrades to several of its products – **MacOS**, **iOS**, **Apple Watch** and a new **iPad OS**.

- **HMD Global (NOKIA brand owner)** launched a number of products in India in the year 2019; they include **Nokia 2.3** on **December 15, 2019**; **Nokia 6.2** and **Nokia 7.2** in October 2019 and **Nokia 4.2** on **May 10, 2019**
- **Google** launches **Pixel 4 phone** on **October 18, 2019** (not to be sold in India); **Google Nest Mini** on **November 25, 2019**; **Google Music App** in India on March 12, 2019; **Google Bolo App** in India on March 6, 2019, targeting rural children
- **Xiaomi** launches **Note 8** and **Note 8 Pro** in India on October 2019
- **Android 10** was out in **September 2019**
- **Reliance Jio Fiber** was launched on **August 18, 2019**

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

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People

- After 53 years of outstanding service, Wipro Chairman **Azim Premji** hands over charge on **July 31, 2019** to his son **Rishad Premji Premji's** personal **philanthropy** touches Rs 100,000 Crores in March 2019!
- CTS CEO Francisco D'Souza** steps down after 12 years (CTS revenue saw top-line growing from \$ 1.42 Billion in 2006 to \$ 16.1 Billion in 2018)
- Keshav Muruges**h and **Praveen Rao** are **Chair** and **Vice Chair** of NASSCOM for FY 2019-20 (starting **April 1, 2019**)
- Narendra Modi** takes oath as **India's Prime Minister** for a second time on **May 30, 2019**
- Sharad Arvind Bobde** takes over as 47th **Chief Justice of India** on **November 18, 2019**
- Om Birla** was unanimously elected as the **Lok Sabha** (Lower House of the Indian Parliament) **Speaker** on June 17, 2019

- Japanese new Emperor Naruhito** is sworn in on **May 1, 2019** (Emperor Akihito abdicated his power on April 30, 2019)
- Greta Thunberg** is **Time Magazine's Person of the Year** 2019

- The year 2019 saw several India-born and educated individuals make it big globally; this include
 - Dr **Sethuraman Panchanathan** (an IISc & IITM Alum) appointed as the Chief of NSF (National Science Foundation), USA on **December 20, 2019**
 - Monisha Ghosh** (IIT-KGP Alum) appointed as CTO of the powerful FCC (Federal Communications Commission) of US in **December 2019**
 - Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella** in the list of 20 **Business Persons of the year 2019**
 - Google CEO Sundar Pichai** becoming the CEO of its parent company **Alphabet** on December 2, 2019
 - BITS-Pilani alumnus Ms **Revathi Advaiti** named **Flex** (earlier **Flextronics**) CEO on **February 11, 2019**
 - Anshula Kant** of State Bank of India appointed as CFO of **World Bank** on **July 12, 2019**
 - Prashanth Chandrasekar** (Bangalore born) is the new CEO of **Stack Overflow** (the first port of call for 50 million developers, globally)!

- Several high-profile visitors to India in the year 2019 include
 - Chinese Premier** and the historic summit with Modi at Mamallapuram (**October 12-13, 2019**)
 - German Chancellor Angela Meckel** (**November 1-3, 2019**)
 - Bangladesh Prime Minister** (**October 3-5, 2019**)
 - WhatsApp** global head **Will Cathcart** (**July 25-26, 2019**)
 - Wal-Mart International CEO** **Judith McKenna** (**May 2-3, 2019**)

- Sri Lanka** elects a new President on November 16, 2019; the new President **Gotabaya Rajapaksa** nominates his brother **Mahinda Rajapaksa** as Prime Minister on November 21, 2019

- Former President **Pranab Mukherjee** gets **Bharat Ratna** – the highest civilian award – on August 8, 2019
- Cisco** Chairman **John Chambers** and **Adobe** CEO **Santanu Narain** are part of **Padma** awards 2019

- Unfortunately India lost several distinguished citizens in the year 2019; this include
 - Former Finance Minister **Arun Jaitley** (**August 24, 2019**)
 - Foreign Minister **Sushma Swaraj** (**August 6, 2019**)
 - Café Coffee Day** founder and the iconic entrepreneur from Bangalore **VG Siddhartha** (July 29, 2019)
 - Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar** (an IITB Alum) (March 17, 2019)

- Jonathan Ive**, the legendary design Guru of Apple announces his decision to leave Apple on **June 27, 2019**; Apple loses \$ 9 Billion of mar-cap in a day!



Universities & Higher Education

- National Education Policy** was out in **2019**; extensive consultations are on; likely to start getting implemented in early 2020
- Ranking becomes a major issue among Institutes of Higher Learning**
 - 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**
 - QS World** rankings of Indian Universities is out on June 18, 2019; **IITKGP** moves up by 28 ranks! **QS Asia 2019 Ranking** was out on **July 22, 2019**; with IIT-Bombay (33), IIT-Delhi (40), IIT-Madras (48), IISc (50), IIT-KGP (53), IIT-K (61), Delhi University (68) and IIT-Roorkee (85), India has 8 entries on the Top 100
 - Times Higher Education** ranking of **September 14, 2019** leads to lots of confusion; 56 Indian Institutes in the Top 500 but none in Top 300 (for the first time after 2012); **IISc** that had been in the Top 300 for many years talks of “data error”; **other IIT's** join to take up “data errors” with the Agency; interestingly, **IIT-Ropar** and **IIT-Indore** lake it to the Top 400!
- IoE** (institutes of Eminence) list of **September 5, 2019** gets **five new** additions – **IIT-Kharagpur, IIT-Madras, BHU, Delhi University and Central University of Hyderabad** – on September 5, 2019 (Teachers Day)
- JEE Mains 2019** held in **January 2019** by National Testing Agency in online mode spread over **January 9, 10, 11 & 12**; nearly 10 Lakhs took the exam; results declared on **January 19, 2019** (10 days ahead of time)
- JEE (Advanced)** results were out on June 14, 2019, for admissions to IIT's; 38,705 qualify; girls constitute just 5,356! Karthikey Gupta among the boys (Rank 1) and Shabnam Sahay among the girls (Rank 10) are the Top 10 rank holders; of the first 100 ranks the number of students opting for IITB is 64! It is 33 for IITD, 2 for IITK and 1 for IITM; of the first 500 ranks, the number of students opting for IITB is 147! It is 142 for IITD, 53 for IITM, 52 for IITK, 47 for IITKGP, 35 for IITR, 17 for IITG and 7 for IITH!
- NEET** (Admission Test for Undergraduate courses in Medical and Dental colleges) results were out on **June 5, 2019**; staggering 14,10,755 students took the exam on 11 languages in 2,546 Centers spread across 154 Cities involving 128,000 invigilators and 64,000 rooms! 7,97,042 students qualify for counselling; Rajasthan boy Khandelwal tops the exam while Delhi's Bhavik and Kaushik from UP secure the second and third rank
- IIT's** to add 4,320 seats in 2020-21; **IIIT's** to add 556 seats in the same period
- IIT-Delhi** announces **500 PhD Fellowships for International students** from the academic year **2019-20**, a game changer initiative of the Indian higher education system
- Sponsored **Research grants** scale new heights in IIT's; **IIT-Madras** earns more than Rs 500 Crores in 2018-19; **IIT-Delhi** and **IIT-Bombay** are not far behind; **IIT-Delhi** starts a **Billion Dollar fund raising** campaign, the first such large-scale fund collection drive; FlipKart founders **Bansals** kick off the drive with **Rs 125 Crores** donation
- 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! **AICTE** cuts 40,000 engineering seats and decides not to give permission for new engineering colleges for 2 years, on **January 31, 2019**

Interesting Application

- Payment** space has huge traction in India in the **year 2019**

- FASTag** (RFID reader-based toll collection) becomes mandatory on all toll booths of NHAI (National Highway Authority of India) **effective December 15, 2019**, hopefully avoiding wasteful delays
- Mobile payment platform **UPI** volume exceeds debit card volume on **October 1, 2019**; touches 1 Billion mark on **October 25, 2019**
- UPI-based mobile payment App **BHIM** goes global with its **Singapore launch** on **November 14, 2019**

- Amazon's** AI-based voice assistant device **Alexa** starts to **speak and understand Hindi** in **September 2019**

- RBI** (Reserve Bank of India) **waives charges on RTGS & NEFT transactions** on **June 6, 2019** incentivizing the country's move towards digital money transactions; ATM charges too are to get rationalized

- ModiCare** (**Aayushman Bharat**) treats 6,85,000 patients free of cost in the first 100 days



Policy

- RBI to transfer Rs 1.76 Crores** to Government of India in the year **2019-20**; unusually high in India
- Public sector Bank mergers finally happened in 2019
 - Dena Bank** and **Vijaya Bank** merge with **Bank of Baroda** (BoB) on **April 1, 2019**
 - Announced on August 23, 2019, twelve more banks get consolidated
 - ❖**Punjab National Bank** with **OBC and United Bank**
 - ❖**Canara Bank** and **Syndicate Bank**
 - ❖**Union Bank** with **Andhra Bank** and **Corporation Bank**
 - ❖**Indian Bank** with **Allahabad Bank**

- Finance Minister** Nirmala Sitharaman announces a slew of measures to boost the economy and improve investor / market sentiment; Public Sector Banks consolidation (Aug 23), “faceless” Income Tax administration (Oct 7), real estate sector fund (Sep 14), corporate tax reduction (Sep 20); this follows the earlier consolidation exercise - **State Banks'** consolidation and **Dena Bank** and **Vijaya Bank** merger with **Bank of Baroda**. Markets react to the first announcement with Sensex gaining 839 points on **August 26, 2019**; the second announcement too is expected to be well-received by the markets on **Sep 3, 2019**

- Reserve Bank of India lowers Repo rate** by **35 basis points** (a new record) on **August 7, 2019**

- Modi government passes the historic **Jammu & Kashmir** re-organization legislation on **August 5-6, 2019** in both the Houses of the Parliament

- Department of Telecom** orders **payment of Rs 93,000 Crores** on **November 14, 2019**, as per **Supreme Court** ruling adding further blow to the ailing telecom companies; Government provides partial relief by way of 2-year moratorium on **November 21, 2019**

- Finance Minister** announces **Rs 25,000 Crores fund** to help the **real estate** sector on **November 7, 2019**

- India decides to opt out of **RCEP** (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) on November 5, 2019, though it was very close to signing the agreement; steps towards bi-lateral agreement with USA are on

- TRAI** norms for **broadcast TV channel pricing** comes into effect from **February 1, 2019**; expected to save money for hundreds of millions of TV consumers

- Drone Policy 2.0** enters Draft stage and ready for comments on **January 15, 2019**

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Science & Technology

- **ISRO** gained lots of attention from the global the scientific community, thanks to its **Moon Mission Chandrayaan II**
 - Announced in **June 2019**
 - Took off on **July 22, 2019** at 2:43 PM ((the takeoff had to be re-scheduled due to technical slag identified 54 minutes before the originally planned 2:51 AM takeoff on July 15, 2019)
 - Third of the four earth-bound maneuvers successfully deployed by ISRO on **July 29, 2019**; successfully completed all earth-bound maneuvers of reached Moon Orbit on August 20, 2019; all set for Rover landing on **September 7, 2019**
 - Rover **Vikram** managed to reach all but 2.1 KM of the 4,00,000+ KM journey to the Moon on 6th **September 2019** night, but “crash lands”; luckily, the **Orbiter** successfully keeps sending Lunar images and said to be in good health with nearly one full year of life.
- **ISRO** (Indian Space Research Organization) launches **CARTOSAT-3** and 13 micro-satellites on November 27, 2019
- **ISRO** gets **approval** from the global standard body **3GPP** for its **home-grown GPS "NavIC"** on **September 24, 2019**
- **IISc** researchers claim **super-conductivity at room temperature** on May 27, 2019
- **MIT** visualization scientist could share the first-ever picture of a **black hole** on **April 10, 2019**
- **Google** claims **quantum computing breakthrough** on **October 27, 2019** with its quantum computers beating the reported fastest computer
- **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
- **History was made** with the **first electric-powered commercial flight** taking off safely from Vancouver, Canada on December 11, 2019; Australian firm **Magnix** designed and retro-fitted an old Beaver Aircraft; **Greg McDougall** founder and Chief Executive of **Harbour Air** flew the aircraft; the flight landed only 15 minutes. While the current Lithium battery will have a range of just 160 KM, in the years to come, electric powered planes with less environmental pollution is likely to a be reality
- **SpaceX** launched its first set of **60 satellites** (of the 12,000 planned over 6 years) on May 23, 2019 to provide Internet connectivity
- 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
- **Infosys Science Prizes** for 2019 were announced on **November 7, 2019**; Professor **Sunita Sarawagi** of **IIT Bombay** is the winner for **Engineering & Computer Science**
- **Nobel Prizes** for 2019 announced in October
 - Announced on **October 14, 2019** Nobel Prize in **Economics 2019** went to **Abhijit Banerjee (India-born) & Esther Duflo** of MIT USA and Michael Kramer of **Harvard, USA**
 - Announced on **October 9, 2019**, Nobel Prize in **Chemistry 2019** went to **John Goodenough** of UT Austin, USA, Stanlet Whittingham of **Binghamton, USA** and **Akira Yoshimo** of Meijo, Nagoya, Japan for their work on “Lithium-ion batteries”
- **Bhatnagar Prizes** were announced on September 26, 2019, **Dr Manik Varma** of **Microsoft India** Research gets the Award for Engineering Science
- 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**
- 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

Startup Scene

- Indian Start-ups are **doing the country proud** globally
 - Ritesh Agarwal founded **Oyo** is the world's third largest hotel as of July 2019! (8,50,000 rooms with 23,000 hotels in 800 cities)
- Indian start-ups are doing **trail-blazing work**
 - Bangalore-based **Skylark** and **Throttle Aerospace** are the very first Drone companies to get DGCA Certification on **June 21, 2019** (The new **Drone Policy** of the Government of India is at work!)
- Start-ups in **Tier II towns** are making news
 - HCL Technologies** acquires Hubli-based semiconductor start-up **Sankalp Semiconductor** for Rs 180 Cr on **September 10, 2019**
- More **unicorns are born** in the **year 2019**
 - Mirace** of South Korea invests \$ 150 Million in **BigBasket**; with their valuation BigBasket turns Unicorn
 - Pune-based data back-up and analytics firm **Druva** offering SaaS-based solutions gets \$ 130 Million funding and becomes an Unicorn on **June 21, 2019**
- Unicorns are getting bigger
 - Fresh capital infusion of \$ 150 Million into **FreshWorks** (Chennai-based customer engagement company) on November 13, 2019 takes its **market cap to \$ 3.5 Billion** (2018 Unicorn)
 - PayTM** raised \$ 1 Billion in end November 2019 taking its **valuation to \$ 16 Billion** (2017 Unicorn)
 - With \$ 250 Million funding from **Softbank** on **July 2, 2019**, Bangalore-based Taxi aggregator **Ola** has a value of \$ 6 Billion (2015 Unicorn)

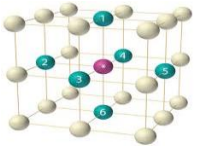
Special events

- In **December 2019**, **Company Law Tribunal** decides the termination of **Cyrus Mistry** as **Chairman** of **Tata Sons** (the 100+ Billion Dollar enterprise that is much respected in India for more than one century) illegal, after three years, leading to much confusion
- **Jammu & Kashmir** and **Ladakh** form **new Union Territories** on **November 1, 2019**
- **Prime Minister Modi** and **President Trump** share the stage in a historic “**Howdy Modi**” event on **September 22, 2019** in Houston, Texas; **Modi** addresses **UN General Assembly** on **September 29, 2019**; **Prime Minister Modi** hosts **Chinese Prime Minister Xi Jinping** at Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu for a **Summit** during **October 11-12, 2019**
- **Brexit causes much turbulence in UK in the year 2019**; Prime Minister **Theresa May** steps down and **Boris Johnson** gets elected on July 24, 2019; had to resign and seek re-election in November and finally Parliament approving the decision Brexit will be a reality (hopefully) by **January 31, 2020**
- **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



Interesting numbers

- India's **IP Index rank** moved from 44 to 36 in the **year 2018**, as per US Department of Commerce Report; the largest jump in the year across all countries
- Of the total 1.1 Million **foreign students** in **USA**, **Indian students'** population crosses 200,000 in 2019 (Open Doors Report dated **November 19, 2019**)
- **China** with 21%, **India** with 18% and **USA** with 8% are the **Top 3 Internet User countries** as per **Mary Meeker Report** of **June 12, 2019**
- India's **Foreign Exchange reserves** at record \$ **454 Billion** in **December 27, 2019**
- **Kumbh Mela** in Prayagraj (erstwhile Allahabad) starts at 4 AM on **January 15, 2019**; 150 million visitors over 2 months (**Jan 15** (Sankranti) to **March 6** (Mahashivratri); 800 special trains, 50,000-strong security force, 220 KM of road, thousands of doctors, hundreds of tents, 4000 Wi-Fi hotspots and 1,20,000 toilets Kumbh Mela 2019 is spectacular in every respect



Telecom

- **China** launches **5G services** on **November 1, 2019** (second country after South Korea); India yet to announce the auction dates!
- **Supreme Court** ruling in **Vodafone** case, telecom companies in dire financial circumstances
- The woes of telecom sector continues; **Vodafone Idea Chairman** KM Birla even talks of “**hanging up**”, if there are no bailouts, on **December 6, 2019**
- Telecom companies increase tariff by up to 40% on **December 1, 2019**

Milestones

- **Accenture** creates history in December 2019; its headcount crosses 500,000 (with 150,000 in India)
- **Alibaba** creates history with \$ **38.4 Billion sales on a single day** on **November 11, 2019**
- **FlipKart** and **Amazon** clock **Rs 31,000 Crores sales** during the Indian festival season in **November 2019**
- **Google** turns **21** on **September 27, 2019**
- **AI program** solves **Rubik Cube** in less than a second, setting a new record on **July 20, 2019**
- The world celebrated the 50th year of “**Man on the Moon**” (Apollo 11 Mission) on **July 21, 2019**
- **Gmail** turned **15** on **April 1, 2019**
- **WWW** turns **30** in **March 2019**
- **Wikipedia** turns 18 on **March 12, 2019**
- **Tata** brand reaches the global **Top 100** (the only entry from India) in January 2019
- **IndiGo** operates **1,500 flights a day** by **December 2019**; it crossed 1,000 flights a day in December 2017
- **Maruti Suzuki** crosses 20 Million sales mark on **December 4, 2019**
- **Rajya Sabha** had its 250th Session on **November 18, 2019**
- Prime Minister **Modi** has 30 Million followers on **Instagram** - the highest for any leader - on **October 14, 2019**
- **Akshaya Patra** mid-day meal program among School students in India (run by ISKCON) touches 3 Billion mark on February 11, 2019; starting with 1,500 children in 2000, it crossed the 1 Billion milestone in **2012** and the 2 Billion milestone on 2016
- **Jet Airways** goes for Bankruptcy on June 16, 2019; stopped flying from **April 17, 2019**

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