# What's hot in IT An Indian Perspective – Feb 2019

## Universities, Science & Technology and Policy

- **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
- **Prime Minister** dedicates **IIT-Dharwad** and **IIIT-Dharwad** to the Nation on **February 10, 2019**
- German auto components biggie **Bosch** funds an **AI Research Center in IIT Madras** with planned investments of Rs 20 Crores on **February 6, 2019**
- **ISRO** unveils "**Human Space Flight Center**" in Bangalore on **February 1, 2019**; 31st communication satellite GSAT 31 launched from France on **February 6, 2019**
- Considering the fact that Government's "**Angel Tax**" continued to bother **start-up** community in India, the tax exemption cap was hiked to Rs 25 Crores and the effective time was increased to 10 years, in **February 2019**
- The new **policy** on **e-Commerce** for firms kicks in from **February 1, 2019**
- **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
- **Union Government** presents its **Vote on Account** on **February 1, 2019**; acting **Finance Minister Piyush Goyal** (Finance Minister Arun Jaitley is away in USA on medical grounds) creates history – the first finance minister who is a formally trained accountant (in fact the national topper in his batch) - does a fine balance between fiscal discipline and populism
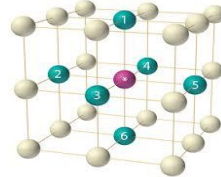
## Startup Scene

- **Intel** acquires Hyderabad-based start-up **Ineda** – a silicon and platform services provider in the graphics arena for GPU - on **February 18, 2019**
- India's hotel room aggregator start-up **Oyo** enters US market in **February 2019**
- **Swiggy** (food delivery company) acquired AI-startup **Kint.io** on **February 4, 2019**

## 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
- **GST collections** in **February 2019** sees a marginal drop (Rs 97,247 Crores)
- India's Central Bank **R**BI cuts "repo rate" by 25 basis points on **February 7, 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
- **Government of India** increases **DA by 3%** (from 9% to 12%) effective **January 1, 2019 on February 19, 2019**
- **Tata Motors** posts a record loss of Rs 27,000 Crores for the **October – December 2018** quarter; the largest ever loss for any Indian company in the corporate history of India!

## MNC IT Companies in India

- In February 2019, French major **Thales** launches its R & D Center in Bangalore
- **Hero Chip Design facility** was launched in Bangalore on **February 20, 2019**
- **Samsung** R & D Institute signs up for another 4,00,000 sq. ft. space in Bangalore on **February 16, 2019**
- **Amazon & Wal-Mart** lose $ 50 Billion in market-capitalization in early **February 2019**, partly impacted by the Indian e-Commerce rule kicking in on **February 1, 2019**; Amazon license gets restored on February 6, 2019

## People

- Prime Minister **Modi** receives **Seoul Peace Prize** on **February 23, 2019**
- IIT-KGP Alumnus and IITB faculty Dr **Subasis Chaudhury** named **IIT - Bombay Director**; to take charge on **April 15, 2019**
- **February 2019 saw Sriram Raghavan of IBM Research (India)** moving to USA to lead AI Research in NYC
- India-educated BITS-Pilani alumnus Ms **Revathi Advaiti** was named Flex (earlier Flextronics) **CEO** on **February 11, 2019**
- **CTS CEO Francisco D'Souza** steps down after 12 years of glorious innings (CTS revenue saw top-line growing from $ 1.42 Billion in 2006 to $ 16.1 Billion in 2018); settles a long-pending dispute with US Regulator Securities & Exchange Commission for $ 25 Million on February 15, 2019
- **Mukesh Ambani** (with $ 54 Billion) in global **Top 10 in Global Rich** list of Hurun (**February 27, 2019**), for the first time; **Bill Gates** is **No 2** with $ 96 Billion and **Bezos of Amazon tops** the list with $ 147 Billion. Interestingly, 2470 individuals account for 12% of global GDP, demonstrating the concentration of wealth among the top

## Products

- **MWC 2019 (February 25 - 28)** had many products particularly smartphones that "fold" from **LG** (Dual Screen) and **Huawei** (Mate X) - in addition to **Samsung** "Fold" - **5G** was the dominant theme
- **Samsung** launched its revolutionary phone with foldable display **Samsung Galaxy Fold** on **February 20, 2019** at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, the place where Steve Jobs launched Apple II way back in 1977

## Indian IT companies

- **TCS** posts good results on **January 10, 2019,** with the highest-ever **quarterly profit Rs 8,105 Crores**

## General

- India's **National War Memorial** (built over 2017 to 2019) was launched in New Delhi near India Gate on **February 25, 2019**
- **Indian Railways'** Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai built **Vande Bharat** Express train commissioned on Delhi – Varanasi route on F**ebruary 17, 2019;** it starts a new era in high-speed train travel in India
- **Bangalore Airport** commissions its 3.4 MW **solar plant** on **February 6, 2019**
- In early **February 2019, Airbus** decides to stop production of its iconic jumbo aircraft "**Airbus 380**" from 2021
- **US President Trump** declares **local emergency** to press through his demand for billions of dollars for the planned Mexico Wall on **February 15, 2019**
- A major forest fire destroys 6,000 acres of forest land in Bandipur, Karnataka during **February 22 - 26, 2019**; 300 cars gutted during Bangalore Aero Show on **February 23, 2019**
- Terrorists with Pakistan support kill 40 Central Reserve Police personnel in **Pulwama** in Kashmir on **February 14, 2019**; India conducts **Surgical Strike 2.0** and kill 300 terrorists in a terror camp by flying planes 70 Km into Pakistan territory in a sophisticated and swift 21-minute operation in the wee hours of February 26, 2019; in turn, it leads to loss of Indian Air Force Pilot Abhinandan Varthaman; luckily, Pakistan released him and Abhinandan reaches India back on **March 1, 2019** after 60 hours of captivity

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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.