

What's hot in IT An Indian Perspective – June 2020

Science & Technology

- **IIT- Bombay** researchers develop **Dhruva** chip that can be used in smart phones and receive signals from NAVIC (ISRO satellites based alternative to GPS) (**23 Jun 2020**)
- The 55th Edition of **Top 500** (List of the world's fastest supercomputers) is out on **22 Jun 2020**; the fastest "Fugaku" from Japan (not China or USA) has 415.5 petaflops in High Performance Linpack and the first # 1 system to be powered by **ARM** processor (not Intel)!
- **Drones** in India get **license to fly long-distance** as per new policy in **June 2020**; 13 entities including SpiceJet and e-commerce / food distribution companies are to begin trials in **July 2020**
- **Ashok Leyland** introduces "fully customizable" **AVTR trucks** - result of 1 Million manhours of R&D (**June 2020**)
- Prestigious Science journals **Lancet** and **New England J of Medicine** had to retract papers in **June 2020** (Covid-19 projection related)



Policy

- Microsoft and other Tech companies start reducing social media Ad spend (**30 Jun**)
- President **Trump** annuls **H1B, H-2B, J-1 and L-1 Visas** till Dec **31, 2020** (likely to impact Indian IT firms and US firms with significant presence in India) (**25 Jun**)
- **Coal Mines** auction starts, hoping to bring light into this ailing sector (**20 Jun**)
- **Garib Kalyan Rojghar** (Omnibus Rural Employment Programme) was kicked off by Prime Minister Modi on **20 Jun 2020** with an ambitious plan of utilizing 12 Government departments to create massive productive employment within the next 125 days with funds allocation of Rs 50,000 Cr
- Government transferred Rs 53,248 Cr to 4.8 Cr Indians as on **June 2** through **PMGRY**
- **Indo-Australian Virtual Summit** inks several deals (**June 4**)
- **Agriculture Reforms** is finally a reality with Cabinet clearing **Ordinances** dismantling **APMC** (Agricultural Produce Marketing Council) and modifying **Essential Commodities Act** on **4 June**
- Finance Ministry **gazettes the new norms for MSME** on June 3 (announced by Finance Minister earlier)
- President **Trump** bans **Chinese airlines** from bringing passengers into USA (**June 3**)

Products

- **Xiaomi** sells 1,000 units of an expensive (\$2,125) **95" Smart TV within 3 minutes** (**25 Jun**)
- **Apple** announces **OS upgrades** to **iOS, iPadOS, Watch OS** and **MacOS** on 24 Jun; announces its decision to move out of **Intel** chips (**24 Jun**)
- **RR Global** (\$ 800 Million company with presence in 85 countries) announces the launch of **BGAUSS-brand of Electric 2-Wheeler** (**12 June 2020**)
- **Xiaomi** launches its new **Laptop Mi Notebook 14 Horizon**; the 14" Windows Laptop powered by Intel i5 processor (Tenth Generation) is priced Rs 54,999 (**11 Jun**)
- **Samsung** launches **Galaxy Tab S6 Lite** in India with starting price Rs 27,999 (**8 Jun**)
- **Realme** watch went on **sale** at @ Rs 3,999 on FlipKart (**5 Jun**)

Indian IT Companies

- **HappiestMinds** file papers for **IPO** (**12 Jun**)
- **ANSR** signs up **3,00,00 sq. ft** of office **space** in **Bengaluru** (**Jun 2020**)



Telecom

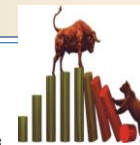
- **Tech Mahindra** and **ITI** (Indian Telephone Industries) - India's first PSU based in Bangalore - collaborate to manufacture telecom gear in India starting **June 2020**
- Supreme Court ruling on **AGR** (Adjusted Gross Revenues) payment spurs PSU's, but does not spare Telcos; **Vodafone Idea** continue to be in deep trouble (**12 June 2020**)

Innovations

- The final hearing on **Puri Rath Yatra** saw the Chief Justice in Nagpur (outside Delhi Supreme Court premise) and Lawyers in multiple cities including London - the **first such hearings over the Net** - on **22 Jun 2020**
- **Airtel Bank Suraksha Salary** scheme launched on **15 Jun**
- **Kerala** Government proposes **boats** as "**co-working spaces**"

Markets

- **Paladin Networks** (founded by Rajat Mohanty in 2000 with focus on cyber security) was acquired by **Atos** on **26 Jun 2020**
- **RIL** hits **\$ 150 Billion** market capitalization - the first for any Indian company; becomes debt-free too! Its Chairman **Mukesh Ambani** with net worth of \$ 67 Billion is the 9th richest person in the world (**20 Jun**)
- **LIC** listing gets fast-tracked on **20 Jun 2020**
- **HappiestMinds** file papers for **IPO** on **12 Jun 2020**
- **Covid-19** continues to **batter the stock markets** globally; India's stock market index **Sensex** gains 879 points on Government announcing Un-lockdown on **June 1, 2020**; back at 10,000 mark on June 4; closes at 34,961 on **June 29, 2020** (32,065 on **May 31**)
- **Microsoft** buys **ADRM** - provider of industry "data models" (**18 Jun**)



Higher Education

- **MHRD** is processing a Proposal of equipping 4 Crores college students with Laptop / Desktop /TV with a budget of Rs 60,000 Crores during the next four years (**30 Jun**)
- **CBSE** cancels the unfinished **Class X and Class XII exams** on **26 Jun 2020**; announces a scheme of computing the final Grades
- Billionaire brothers Mumbai-born **David and Simon Reuben** **donate \$ 101 Million** to **Oxford University** (**12 June 2020**)
- **NIRF** Rankings are out **IITM** is on the top of the list (**11 Jun**)
- **QS** Rankings are out; **MIT** is No 1 (**07 Jun**)
- **IISc** No 1 in **Times Higher Education Asia** Rankings (**3 June**)

People

- **India's Defence Secretary** Dr Ajay Kumar and **Delhi's Health Minister** Jain are back to work by **20 Jun 2020** after fully recovering from Covid-19; they tested positive in early June
- 20 Indian Army men died at China India border on the night of **16 Jun**
- **IIT Madras** Alumnus **Dr Prabhakar Raghavan** is the new Head of **Search and Assistant at Google** taking over charge from **Ben Gomes** (**5 June 2020**)
- **Joe Biden** wins Presidential **nomination** from Democratic Party on (**5 June**)
- Bangalore-based **Biocon** founder **Kiran Mazumdar Shaw** is **EY Entrepreneur of the World 2020!** (**1 Jun**)



MNC Companies

- **Microsoft** acquires cyber security firm **CyberX** (**20 Jun**); decides to close all physical stores taking \$ 450 Million hit (**20 Jun**); **buys ADRM** - provider of industry "data models" (**18 Jun**)
- **Amazon** exploring buying 5% stake in **Airtel** at \$ 2 Billion in early **June 2020**
- **Western Digital** announces the design of **1 TB micro-SD card** by engineers in **Bengaluru** (**June 2020**)
- **Zoom** (Video Conferencing App software company) **results zoom!** Revenue of \$ 328 Million Vs \$ 198,000 revenue last year (**Jun 2020**)



Professor **Sowmyanarayanan Sadagopan** is the **Director** of **IIT-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.

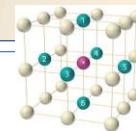
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Special events and Milestones

- > **Puri Rath Yatra** initially cancelled by Supreme Court finally took off with Supreme Court allowing it with limited temple staff only (and no large crowd of devotees) (**23 Jun**)
- > **India** gets elected to **UN Security Council** (as non-permanent Member) for a period of 2 years with 184 of the 192 Member countries supporting it (**20 Jun**)
- > **Adani Green Energy** gets \$ 6 Billion (over 5 years) order for **8 GW solar power plant** (will be the largest in the world) from Solar Energy Corporation of India on **10 June 2020**
- > Adani decides to back out of taking over **Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Mangalore Airports** from IAAI; **Navi Mumbai Airport** goes thru rough weather (Covid-19 impact); **Bhogapuram** green field **Airport** in **Vizianagaram** all set to take off as per June announcement
- > The iconic **cycle brand Atlas Cycles** becomes history with the last plant getting shut down (**5 Jun**)
- > **Indo-China border** and **Indo-Nepal border tension** continued in **June 2020** though largely under control; talks at multiple levels (Military Commanders, Officials, Heads of State); **20 Indian Army men died** at China India border on the night of **16 Jun**; Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** attended a meeting in Russia; both USA and Russia offering to help India in defusing the tension
- > Oil India fire in Assam throughout June causes lot of damage
- > **Cyclone NISARGA** spared its fury on Mumbai on; the City narrowly escaped; there were about half a dozen loss of lives near Mumbai (**3 Jun**)
- > **Coronavirus Disease** (officially **Covid-19**) continues to cause havoc throughout the month of June and the number of cases cross 10 Million globally and the death toll crosses half a million (**30 Jun**)
 - > **Lockdown Un-lock 1** starting **June 8, 2020** has led to opening of economic activity; New York City also reopens on 8 June 2020; Chennai clamps lockdown again on **19 Jun to 30 Jun**; parts of Bengaluru too got lockdown on 19 Jun; all of Bengaluru to get curfew on Sundays from **5 Jul 2020**; **Lockdown Un-lock 2** starts from July 1; Prime Minister Modi speaks to the Nation (**30 Jun**)
 - > On **June 30, 2020**, cases / deaths stood at
 - ❖ Global: More than 10 Million and more than 500,000
 - ❖ India : More than 500,000 and more than 17,000
 - ❖ USA: More than 2.5 Million and 1 more than 25,000+
 - > Death count growth
 - ❖ **India 1 (Mar 13)**, crossed 100 (**6 Apr**), 500 (**19 Apr**), 1,000 (**29 Apr**), 2,000 (**10 May**), 4,000 (**25 May**), 8,000 (**11 June**), 10,000 (**16 Jun**), 15,000 (**26 Jun**), 16,475 (**29 Jun**)
 - ❖ **USA 1 (Mar 3)**, crossed 100 (**Mar 18**), 1,000 (**Mar 28**), 5,000 (**Apr 4**), 10,000 (**Apr 8**), 50,000 (**Apr 29**), 100,000 (**May 30**), 110,000 (**June 9**), 125,318 (**29 Jun**)
 - ❖ **Global 1 (Jan 15)**, crossed 100 (**Jan 28**), 1,000 (**Feb 11**), 5,000 (**Mar 13**), 10,000 (**Mar 20**), 50,000 (**Apr 3**), 100,000 (**Apr 12**), 200,000 (**Apr 28**), 300,000 (**May 16**), 400,000 (**June 7**), 450,000 (**19 Jun**), 499,913 (**29 Jun**)
- > **India's Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar** and **Delhi's Health Minister Jain** are back to work by **20 Jun 2020** after fully recovering from Covid-19; they tested positive in early June
- > **Astra-Zeneca** starts production of **Corona Vaccine** based on **Oxford University** research; **Pune-based Serum Research Institute** is one of the agencies contracted for manufacture
- > **Shramik Express** Trains continue to move migrant labourers in much of **June 2020**; nearly two million of them moved by Railways; all regular trains cancelled till 15 Aug
- > **TCS Marathon** in New York City (the world's largest Marathon) scheduled for **28 Jun 2020** is cancelled due to Covid-19
- > Some good news; **New Zealand** manages **43,000 strong crowd to watch a Rugby match** on **19 Jun** (demonstrating its win over Covid-19)!



Interesting numbers



- > India's **foreign exchange** reserve cross \$ **500 Billion** for the first time (**12 June 2020**)
- > **Digital payment jump** 24% in **May 2020** (123 Cr transactions involving Rs 2.18 Lakh Cr)
- > India's **wheat procurement** at record **382 Million Metric Tons** (after 7 years)
- > **KVIC** (Khadi Village Industries Corporation) has **turnover of Rs 89,000 Cr**; twice that of HLL in 2019-20; likely to cross Rs 100,000 Cr in 2020-21
- > India **saved Rs 5,000 Cr foreign exchange** by shoring up strategic reserves in Mar to **June 2020**
- > JEE coaching is Rs 24,000 Cr business with 12 Lakh students paying Rs 1 Lakh per year on an average over 2 years! Of the 25 Lakhs that take the exam 12 Lakhs take coaching route' there are 300 Coaching Institutes and 2,500 Hotels in Kota alone (with charge of Rs 80,000 per year per student)
- > **Ganga Quest** quiz program has **one million contestants**!

Interesting Apps & Applications

- > **Chalo** (bus tracking App) powers 2800 buses in 28 cities today (**Jun 2020**)
- > **TRAI** launches **Channel Selector App** (**26 Jun**)
- > **WhatsApp Payments** go live in Brazil on 16 Jun but stopped on **25 Jun**
- > **Hyundai Motors** announces "**click to buy**" option on India store on **June 4**
- > Indian music store **SaReGaMa** announces global **deal** with **Facebook** on **June 2**
- > Google App Store pulls down "Remove China App" and India-based Mitron on **June 3**

Start-ups

- > Online exam preparation software start-up **Byjus** gets \$ 10.5 Billion valuation (**25 Jun**)
- > With \$ 150 Million Series-C funding **Postman** (API testing start-up) gets **Unicorn** status in **June 2020**
- > **Chalo** App powers 2000 buses in 28 cities today (**Jun 2020**)
- > **Swasth**, a platform of 100+ ecosystem partners focused on tele-medicine for Covid-19 care takes off in **June 2020**
- > **Zomato** co-founder **Pankaj Chaddah** founded **Mindhouse** focused on meditation talks of \$ 10 Billion opportunity!
- > **PepperMint** (IITB incubated startup) gets funding to start manufacturing of "**floor cleaning Robot**" in June
- > **Airtel** picks up 5% stake in Edu-tech start-up **Lattu Media** (**20 Jun**)
- > Hyper Apps start-up **Jiffy.ai** raises \$ 18 Million in **Series A funding** (**11 June**)
- > Anand Mahindra invests \$ 1 Million in start-up **Hapramp** (started by IIT-Vadodara students) - a social media company that smartly uses blockchain
- > **Uber** launches **multi-hour, multi-stop service** in 17 cities in India (after piloting in Chandigarh) @ Rs 189 per hour in **June 2020**
- > New norms for **classification and MSME** formalized by Government on **June 1, 2020**

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