

**What's hot in IT - A Perspective from India  
February 2021**

1. **Science & Technology, Innovation & Policy**

- **ISRO** launched **Brazilian** satellite **Amazonia-1** and another **17 satellites** at 10:24 hours IST from India's own launch vehicle PSLV-C51; after a flight of 17 minutes, the vehicle injected the satellite into its intended orbit and in the succeeding 1 hour 38 minutes, all the 18 co-passenger satellites successfully separated from the PSLV in a predetermined sequence (28 Feb 2021)
- **NASA Mars** rover **Perseverance** lands in **Mars** Thursday, after a 203-day journey traversing 293 million miles at 12:55 PM PST (19 Feb 2021)
- **Australia** creates history by making a **law** that forces **social media firms** like Google and Facebook to **pay** news companies for sharing Australian news content on their platforms (26 Feb 2021)
- Government of India
  - Announces **Polls in five States** – West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam & Puducherry – polling dates Mar 26 to April 29; results on 2 May (26 Feb 2021)
  - Makes law to monitor social media content and OTT content **Digital Media Ethics Code** (26 Feb 2021)
  - Extends PLI (Production Linked Incentives) to **IT hardware manufacture** (25 Feb 2021)
  - Revised **Mapping Policy** that allows satellite data up to 1 Meter accuracy to be de-classified; likely to support map-based start-up ecosystem; **ISRO** and **MapMyIndia** announce partnership (15 Feb 2021)
  - Presented Union Government **Budget** that had **Rs 50,000 Cr** allocation for **National Research Foundation** and "Glue Grant" to permit premier educational Institutes in metros like Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad to have an umbrella structure for better synergy (1 Feb 2021)

2. **Higher Education**

- The first phase of **JEE (Mains)** went off smoothly with 95% attendance (26 Feb 2021)
- **ISB** and **4 IIM's** in Financial Times **Top 100** Global B Schools (7 Feb 2021)
- **BITS** announces Rs 1,500 Cr investment into an ambitious **School of Management** in Mumbai (1 Feb 2021)

3. **Special events and Milestones**

- **NHAI** sets a new record of completing 25.54 Km of road in 18 hours (28 Feb 2021)
- **NSE** the **world's largest** derivatives exchange had technical glitch for a couple of hours (24 Feb 2021)
- **Facebook** shuts down for a couple of days in **Australia** (23 Feb 2021)
- **4G services** restored in **Jammu Kashmir** (5 Feb 2021)
- **Texas power outage** causes misery in USA (19 - 28 Feb 2021)
- **Uttarakhand disaster** caused by Glacier meltdown leads to loss of several dozen lives (7 Feb 2021)
- Crowd-sourcing for **Ram Mandir in Ayodhya** leads to a record Rs 2,500 Cr (28 Feb 2021)
- **Haridwar** getting ready for 2021 **Kumbh Mela** – after 11 years it is returning to Haridwar; this year it will be officially only for 30 days (1-30 April 2021)
- **Myanmar** is back under military control; Government control of protesting civilians leads to several deaths throughout the month (1 Feb 2021)

- **Coronavirus Disease** (officially **Covid-19**) updates
  - In India Covid-19 continued to slow down in February 2021
  - US death toll went past 500,000 (23 Feb 2021)
  - On 28 Feb 2021, cases/deaths stood at
    - Global: 113 Million and 2.52 Million
    - India 11,096,731 and 157,051
    - USA: 28,174,978 and 506,760
- **Lot of action on vaccine front;**
  - India exports Covid-19 Vaccine to many countries
  - Global vaccination goes past 100 Million and Indian vaccination goes past 15 Million (28 Feb 2021)

#### 4. Markets

- **Sensex** has a record jump of 2,351 points on 1 Feb 2021 (highest rise on Budget day) and 3,500 points over 2 Feb 2021, following Union Budget; it **crossed 50,000** for the first time (4 Feb 2021); **NIFTY** moves past 15,000 for the first time (5 Feb 2021)
- Telecom service provider **Railtel** (that uses fiber optic cables along Indian Railways track to provide Internet connectivity) **IPO** gets **over-subscribed** 41 times (22 Feb 2021)
- **SAP** acquired Finland-based “No Code” platform **AppGyver** (7 Feb 2021)

#### 5. Products

- **Facebook / WhatsApp / Twitter** Privacy policy leads to Indian users moving to platforms like **Koo** (with 3 Million downloads); messaging Apps **Signal** and **Arattai** (from Zoho) seeing traction (6 Feb 2021)
- **Microsoft** launches **Viva** - Employee Experience platform (5 Feb 2021)

#### 6. Indian IT Companies

- **Adani** to enter Data Center space thru JV with US-based **EdgeConneX** (to build hyper-scale data centres in six Indian cities (23 Feb 2021)
- **Wipro** and **Tech Mahindra** win Telefonica deal (16 Feb 2021)
- **NASSCOM** estimates **Indian IT industry** to grow by 2.3% in 2020-2021 and touch \$ 194 Billion; a record for Covid-19 year when most other industries have shown negative growth (15 Feb 2021)
- **Ola** starts building its **mega EV factory** to make **Etergo AppScooter** that it acquired from Netherlands; the 500-acre plant with 2 million scooter capacity in Hosur, Tamil Nadu will have Rs 2,400 Cr investment and create 10,000 direct jobs and expected to be the largest 2-wheeler factory in the world (7 Feb 2021)

#### 7. MNC Companies in India

- **Bosch** invests Rs 800 Cr in its Audugodi smart city building (24 Feb 2021)
- **Amazon** plans to manufacture **Amazon Fire** in Chennai (16 Feb 2021)
- **Samsung** India R & D completes **25 years** in Bangalore (8 Feb 2021)

8. Startup scene

- **BharatPe** nearing **Unicorn** status in less than 2 years (23 Feb 2021)
- **MyGate** forays into e-Commerce (17 Feb 2021)
- Mental health service provider **InnerHour** raised \$ 5.2 Million (6 Feb 2021)

9. People

- Bangalore-born **Swati Mohan** announced the successful launch of **NASA Mars vehicle Perseverance** (23 Feb 2021)
- **Aditya Mittal** (Lakshmi Mittal's son) is the new CEO of **ArcelorMittal** (the world's largest steel manufacturer (8 Feb 2021)
- **Jeff Bezos** steps down as **Amazon CEO** (5 Feb 2021)
- Indian-American **Bhavya Lal** is Interim **NASA** Chief (1 Feb 2021)

10. Telecom / Infrastructure

- **Airtel** talks of **5G launch** using **QualComm** gear (19 Feb 2021)
- **Airtel, Vodafone-Idea** and **Jio** pay EMD; **auction** to start 1 Mar (22 Feb 2021)

11. Interesting numbers

- **NASSCOM** estimates **Indian IT industry** to touch \$ 194 Billion in 2020-21 (28 Feb 2021)
- **Motera Cricket stadium** in Ahmedabad with 110,000 seats gets inaugurated; it is the world's largest, with Melbourne Cricket Stadium having 100,024 seats at No 2 (25 Feb 2021)
- **FASTag** based toll collection by NHAI crosses **Rs 100 Crore** in a day (19 Feb 2021)
- Petrol price crosses Rs 100 per liter after 2 years (15 Feb 2021)
- India's foreign exchange reserves **touch \$ 590 Billion** for the first time (5 Feb 2021)
- **Sensex** crossed 50,000 for the first time (4 Feb 2021); **NIFTY** moves past 15,000 for the first time (5 Feb 2021)
- **UPI** transactions hit 2.3 Billion (value of Rs 4.3 Trillion) in January (1 Feb 2021)
- **GST** collection for January 2021 touch Rs 1.2 Lakh Crores, the highest so far (1 Jan 2021)

---

Professor Sowmyanarayanan **Sadagopan** ([s.sadagopan@gmail.com](mailto:s.sadagopan@gmail.com)) is the Director of IIIT-Bangalore. These are his personal views. He has been writing on "**What's hot in IT**" with an Indian perspective continuously from 1997; **Times of India**, **Financial Express** and **IT Magazine** carried the monthly (and yearly columns) till 2016; **IEEE India Newsletter** has been carrying the quarterly columns since 2016