

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

1. Science & Technology, Innovation & Policy

- **Chinese** space vehicle **Zhurong** drove down the surface of the **Planet Mars** at 240AM GMT, making it the first country to land and drive a vehicle on Martian soil (22 May 2021)
- **Google** annual conference **I/O** showcases **Project Starline** that uses 3D holographic technology to make video conferences far more realistic (19 May 2021)
- **IBM** announces its **2-nanometer** chip **technology** with a promise of 45% increase in performance and 75% reduction in energy compared the fastest chips that use 7 nm technology today (6 May 2021)
- **Telangana** starts experiments for delivering **Covid-19 medicines** using **Drones** (4 May 2021)

2. Higher Education

- **JEE (Advanced) Exam** postponed (28 May 2021)
- Online Education biggie **upGrad** acquires college video recording specialist **Impartus** (24 May 2021)
- BITS Pilani's B School **BITSOM** announces a special Executive Education Program with **LBS** (London Business School) (19 May 2021)
- **NEAT-NEET-PG exam** for Medical Doctors postponed by 4 months to make them available for Covid-19 work (2 May 2021)

3. Special events and Milestones

- Election results for five States (West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam & Puducherry) declared (2 May 2021)
- **Cyclone Tauktae** (19 May 2021) and **Yaas** (26 May 2021) causes lot of damage in Gujarat and West Bengal and Odisha & Jharkhand
- **Israel Palestine conflict** leads to tension in the Middle East (10-21 May 2021)
- Coronavirus Disease (officially Covid-19) updates
 - Supreme Court sets up Covid-19 Task Force, as the country struggles to face the hugely large onslaught of the pandemic in May 2021
 - Pune-based **MyLabDiscovery** develops Covid-19 home test kit **CoviSelf** that costs just Rs 250 (20 May 2021)
 - The month of **May 2021 was most cruel to India**; it saw Covid-19 incidents **climbing to a high of 400,000 400,000 of daily new cases**; luckily, by month-end it was down to nearly 150,000; **daily death count** reached a peak of 4,591 on 19 May and started slowing down to 3,000+ by end May; total India death count crosses 300,000 (24 May 2021)
 - On 31 May 2021, **cases/deaths** stood at
 - **Global:** 17,00,51,718 and 35,40,437
 - **India:** 2,80,47,534 and 3,29,100
 - **USA:** 3,29,29,178 and 5,88,596
- Lot of action on **vaccine** front
 - The third vaccine **Sputnik V** joins the vaccine scene in India; ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) recommends 3 months gap between first & second dose for **Covishield** vaccine (12 May 2021)
 - India decides to vaccinate **45+ from 1 April and 18+ from 1 May**, but supply issues and coordination issues bring down the vaccination drive; things stabilised in the

last week and total vaccination stood at **43 Million (both the doses)** and **165 Million (one dose)** (31 May 2021)

4. Products

- **Google** launches **News Showcase** in India (18 May 2021)

5. Markets

- **Sensex** is back at **50,000** (19 May 2021); **NIFTY** is back at **15,000** (19 May 2021)
- Online Education biggie **upGrad** acquires college video recording specialist **Impartus** (24 May 2021)
- **PhonePe** to buy **Indus OS** for \$ 60 Million (19 May 2021)
- **Zensar** to acquire Anil Khandekar and Suresh Potluri founded US-based **M3bi** for \$ 30 Million (12 May 2021)

Globally,

- **Amazon** buys out **MGM Studio** for \$ 8.45 Billion (27 May 2021)
- **AT&T Media, Warner and Discovery** announce a **merger** leading to a \$ 130 Billion enterprise; AT&T moves out of media business with a cash of \$ 40+ Million (19 May 2021)
- **IBM** acquires Salesforce implementation partner **WAEG** (19 May 2021)

6. Indian IT Companies

- **TCS CodeVita** is in **Guinness World Records**; 136,054 students from 34 countries participate (24 May 2021)
- **CTS** posts good results for **Jan to Apr quarter** top-line at \$ 4.4 Billion and bottom-line at \$ 505 Million (4 May)

7. MNC Companies in India

- **WhatsApp** sues Indian government (27 May 2021)
- **Google** launches **News Showcase** in India (18 May 2021)
- India-born **Raghu Raghuram** is named **vmWare global CEO** effective 1 June (6 May 2021)

8. Startup scene

- **Moglix** - the online marketplace for industrial goods - joins the **Unicorn** from India club (19 May 2021)
- IT gadgets / hardware product dealer Mumbai-based **Savex** buys Bangalore-based **Inflow**; top-line of the combined entity to cross \$ 3 Billion (5 May 2021)

9. People

- **Rajesh Bansal** appointed as **CEO of RBI Innovation Hub** (27 May 2021)
- Raghu Raghuram is vmWare CEO (6 May 2021)
- Covid-19 casualties include
 - **Sundarlal Bahuguna** of Chipko movement fame (**21 May 2021**)
 - IITD Prof **Dinesh Mohan**, famous for his studies on road accidents in India (**21 May 2021**)

- Renowned Sanskrit Scholar well-versed in Digital technology Dr **Lakshmi Thathachar** (19 May 2021)
- Financial Express Editor **Sunil Jain** (14 May 2021)
- Bennett Coleman (Owner of Times of India) Chairperson **Indu Jain** (11 May 2021)

12. Interesting numbers

- **BigBasket** sales cross Rs 8000 Cr (\$ 1 Billion) in the year 2020-21
- **SoftBank** posts \$ 45.8 Billion profit, **the highest ever for a Japanese company**; interestingly, it had its worst performance with a huge loss last year (13 May 2021)

Professor Sowmyanarayanan Sadagopan 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. Past items are available in www.profsadagopan.com He can be reached at s.sadagopan@gmail.com