

What's hot in IT in September 2021 A Perspective from India

1. Science & Technology, Innovation & Policy

- Self-writing AI code **Codex** from **OpenAI** (AI Research Labs), debuts (10 September 2021)
- India's highest S&T Award (**Shanti Swaroop Bhatnagar Award**) announced; the 2021 list has two Theoretical Computer Science researchers (of the 11 winners) Dr **Debdeep Mukhopadhyay** of IITKGP and Dr **Saket Saurabh** of IMSc, Chennai (28 September 2021)
- **SpaceX** all-civilian (no professional astronaut) crew took off and landed safely after 4 days (15-18 September 2021)
- **MEITY** announces 1000-day Policy to reach **\$ 1 Trillion target** for the **Digital Economy** (24 September 2021)
- Government announces **80% reduction in Patent Filing Fee** to all (Public and Private) higher education Institutes (23 September 2021)
- **NARCL** - an Asset Reconstruction Bank (ARC) - formally set up to improve the health of Banking sector (17 September 2021)
- **Start-up friendly Procurement Policy** announced by the Government of Karnataka Government (11 September 2021)
- **China** declare all **crypto** transaction **illegal** (11 September 2021)

2. Higher Education

- Six **IIT's**, **IISc** and **OP Jindal University** in **QS Top 500** (23 September 2021)
- **NIRF** Ranking is out; **IITM** continues to be No 1 (9 September 2021)
- **THE** (Times Higher Education) **World University Rankings 2022** has 71 Indian Institutes in the Top 1,000; **IISc** at 300-350 band is the Top Institute; seven **IIT's** did not participate (2 September 2021)
- **JEE (Advanced)** (admission test for IIT's) **date** (3 October 2021) and **cut-off** (87.89) announced (15 September 2021); in an unfortunate development there was a minor scam in **JEE (Mains) Online Entrance** examination; luckily, the damage was contained (5 September 2021)
- Nearly 16 Lakhs take **NEET** Exam (admission test for Medical colleges) in 3,800 centres in India and abroad (12 September 2021)
- **Kotak** establishes an **AI Centre** at **IISc** Bangalore (18 September 2021)

3. Special events and Milestones

- Prime Minister **Modi visits USA** for 4 days; attends **Quad** (USA, Australia, Japan & India) meeting and speaks at **United Nations General Assembly** (15-19 September 2021)
- **China's** real estate firm **Evergrande** and its \$ 300 Billion debt had global implications (September 2021)
- **US pullout** from **Afghanistan** was complete on 31 August 2021; the new Nation is struggling to stabilise (September 2021)

On Covid-19 front,

- **6 Billion** Covid-19 vaccine shots were administered globally by 22 September 2021
- **China** claims to have double-vaccinated **1 Billion** people
- **India vaccination creates a record** 20+ Million on a single day on 17 September 2021; completes 886 Million by 30 September 2021 with 237 Million getting both the vaccinations; **Bangalore Urban completes 100% vaccination** of single dose (30 September 2021)

4. Products

- **Apple** launches **iPhone 13**, new **iPad Mini** and **Apple Watch Series 7** on 14 September 2021; India launch of **iPhone 13** on 24 September 2021
- **OLA Scooter** launches its **Electric Scooter** on 15 September 2021; had brisk sales with 4 scooters sold per second; the event scheduled on 5 September 2021 had to be postponed due to technical glitch; the launch had a “digital touch”
- **PayTM** launches **super-fast UPI** (5 September 2021)

5. Markets

- **Sensex** crossed **60,000** (24 September 2021)
- EduTech start-up **Vedantu** becomes a Unicorn (the 29th in the year 2021) (30 September 2021)
- **Big Basket** formally becomes a **Tata Enterprise** (5 September 2021)
- **The IPO Scene**
 - Chennai-based Girish Mathrubootham founded **FreshWorks** IPO on NADSAQ raised \$ 1.03 Billion; it reminded many Indians of the highly successful listing of Infosys on NADDAQ in 1999; FreshWorks shares had a 32% gain on Day 1 (22 September 2021)

- **Paras Defence** creates history; IPO on NSE subscribed 304 times (22 September 2021)
- **ThoughtWorks** IPO on NADDAQ raised \$ 6 Billion (16 September 2021)
- **In mergers/acquisitions and investments**
 - **Persistent** buys US-based payment consulting firm **SCI** for \$ 53 Million (29 September 2021)
 - **Intuit** acquires-mail marketing major **MailChimp** for \$ 12 Billion (14 September 2021)
 - **MPhasis** acquiresUS-based design consultancy firm **Blink Interactive** for \$ 94 Million (23 September 2021)
 - **PayU** acquires Srinivasu-founded Indian bill payment gateway leader **BillDesk** for \$4.5 Billion (1 September 2021)

Start-up M&A include

- Delhi-based EduTech **Eupheys** buys **ClassKlap** for \$ 19 Million (24 September 2021)
- **Byjus** buys US-based coding platform **Tynker** for \$ 200 Million (13 September 2021)
- **RIL** buys **Strand Life** (started by IISC Professor Vijay Chandru) for Rs 393 Cr (5 September 2021)

6. Indian IT Companies

- **HCL Tech** gets multi-year order from US-based **MKS Instruments** and Belgium's digital service provider **Proximus** (21 September 2021)
- **TCS market capitalisation** goes past **\$ 200 Billion**; the first Indian Tech company and the second Indian company to reach this milestone; the 50-year old TCS took 13.5 years to reach \$ 100 Billion and 3.5 years to add the next 100 Billion! interestingly, **SAP** and **IBM** have \$171 Billion & \$ 122 Billion market capitalisation respectively (15 September 2021)
- **Wipro** senior managers start attending offices in-person for 2 days in a week starting 13 September 2021
- **TCS** gets a 10-year order for digital transformation of **London Metro** (**9 September 2021**); **5-year deal with** German Bank NORD/LB (28 September 2021)
- **Lucas TVS** to make **Li-Ion batteries** with US-based **24M Corp** (2 September 2021)

7. MNC Companies in India

- **Accenture** hired nearly 70,000 in India in 2021; it is estimated to employ 300,000 professionals in India (25 September 2021)
- French IT Services major **Atos** to hire 15,000 in India this year (19 September 2021)

8. Interesting Applications

- **Microsoft** and **Amazon** sign an agreement with Indian Government for an ambitious **Agriculture information System** (with a potential of \$24 Billion) to transform Agri-Tech in India (17 September 2021)

9. Startup scene

- Indian start-ups turning **Unicorn** is unstoppable; 28 new Unicorns were added in the first nine months of 2021; in the year 2020, India added 38 Unicorns
- **ET Start-up Awards 2021** announced (29 September 2021)
 - **Start-up of the Year** goes to **Zomato**
 - **Midas touch** goes to **Sanjiv Bikhchandani** of **InfoEdge**
 - **Woman Ahead** goes to **Lizzie Chapman** of **ZestMoney**
 - **Comeback Kid** goes to **Ixigo**
 - **Best on Campus** goes to **FamPay**
 - **Social Enterprise** goes to **Genrobotic Innovations**
 - **Top Innovator** goes to **Log 9 Materials**
 - **Bootstrap Camp** goes **kovai.co**
 - **Covid-led business transformation** goes to **Urban Company**
- **ISRO** partnership with Start-ups in Space Tech takes off; **Skyroot** and **Agnikul** to get access to ISRO facilities (14 September 2021)
- **Start-up friendly Procurement Policy** announced by the **Government of Karnataka** (3 September 2021)

9. People

- **IITB** graduate **Shubham Kumar** from Bihar **tops Civil Services** Exam (11 September 2021)
- Prime Minister **Modi** visits **USA** for 4 days; meets **US President** Biden, **Vice President** Kamala Harris and **Adobe** and **QualComm** CEOs (15-19 September 2021)

- Prime Minister **Modi**, Bengal Chief Minister **Mamta Banerjee** and Serum Institute of India CEO **Adar Poonawalla** in **Times 100 List** (11 September 2021)
- **Ola Electric** plans to hire up to 10,000 persons in its Tamil Nadu factory near Bangalore; it will be “all women” factory! Starts with 1,000 women in September 2021

10. Telecom & Infrastructure

- **AGR** relief measures (4-year moratorium) bring fresh oxygen into the beleaguered Telecom industry, especially to **Vodafone-Idea** (14 September 2021)

11. Interesting Apps / Applications

- Government of India rolls out **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission** - National Health ID for all Indians, connectivity for all hospitals and health-workers - after experimenting for over a year in six Union Territories (28 September 2021)
- **Income Tax Department** continued with **performance** issues in early September; most of them addressed by month end (11 September 2021)
- **IIITH** starts experimenting with **AI solution for Road Safety** thru **i-Raste** (11 September 2021)

12. Interesting numbers

- India's **Global Innovation Index** jumps 2 points to 46th position; it has improved steadily over the past 5 years from a position of 81 in the year 2015 (23 September 2021)
 - **Accenture** annual revenue crosses **\$ 50 Billion** (23 September 2021)
 - **UPI** logs **3.65 Billion** transactions in September 2021
 - **Sensex** hits a **new high of 60,000** on 24 September 2021; it crossed
 - o 10,000 on 6 February 2006
 - o 20,000 On 29 October 2007
 - o 30,000 on 4 March 2015
 - o 40,000 on 8 October 2020
 - o 50,000 on 21 January 2021, and,
 - o 60,000 on 24 September 2021
 - India's **GST** monthly **collection** at Rs 1,17,010 Lakh Crores in September (1 October 2021)
 - India's **forex reserves** touch \$ 638 Billion (24 September 2021)
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