

IT in July - September 2017



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General

- **GST** is a reality on July 1, 2017; border check-post become history leading to increased supply chain efficiency, hopefully
- Launched on Aug 12, 1981 **IBM PC** completes 36 years; **Hashtag** turns ten on Aug 23, 2017
- India's 14th **President Ram Nath Kovind** assumes office on July 25, 2017; **Venkaiah Naidu** takes charge as India's 13th **Vice President** on Aug 11, 2017; **Deepak Misra** takes over as the 45th **Chief Justice of India** on Aug 28, 2017
- **Modi** makes a historic **visit to Israel** in July 2017, the first ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister
- G20 meets in Germany during July 7-9, 2017 in the backdrop of changed geo-politics
- Prime Minister springs a surprise by inducting **Nirmala Sitharaman** as full time **Defence Minister** on Sep 3, 2017 cabinet reshuffle
- Germany elects **Angela Merkel** for fourth time in a row on Sep 24, 2017
- Multiple natural and man-made **disasters** in this quarter - terrorist attack in Spain (Aug 17), Hurricane in Florida (Sep) and London Tube blast (Sep 15), earthquake in Mexico (Sep 19)

Technology

- **INSAT launch** on Aug 31 fails, after nearly all successful launches by ISRO in the recent months

Infrastructure

- **India's first bullet train** between Mumbai and Ahmedabad formally announced by **Indian and Japanese PM** on Sep 14, 2017
- **Lucknow Metro** starts on Sep 5, 2017
- **Sardar Sarovar dam** (the world's second largest) on Narmada river in Gujarat with 1,450 MW Hydel power plant commissioned on Sep 17, 2017

Markets

- Indian stock markets were on a roll in July 2017; **Sensex** (BSE index) went past 32,000 for the first time on July 13, 2017; **NIFTY** crossed 10,000 mark for the first time in its 21 year history on July 25, 2017; however, on Sep 22, 2017 Sensex fell to 31,922 and NIFTY to 9964!
- **Google** buys IP from **HTC Pixel** unit for \$ 1.2 Billion on Sep 21, 2017
- Tata **Steel** and **ThyssenKrupp** decide to merge in September 2017
- Private equity firm KKR buys **WebMD** (that had connections to SGI Founder Jim Clarke and India-born Pavan Nigam) for \$ 2.2 Billion on July 24, 2017
- **Freecharge** acquired by **Axis Bank** on July 26, 2017 shows signs of consolidation in "Mobile Wallets" space
- **ABB** acquires **GE Industrial Solutions** Division for \$ 2.2 B on Sep 25, 2017

Products

- **Goggle** launches "**backup and sync**" on July 12, 2017, **Android 8** (Oreo) on Aug 21, India news "**feed**" on Sep 8 and Mobile payment App **Tez** on Sep 18 in India

- **Apple** launches **iPhone X** and **iPhone 8**, **Apple Watch 3**; also updates its software - **iOS 11**, **Apple Watch OS 4**, **Mac OS High Sierra** in Sep; iPhone 8 pre-orders started on Sep 22 in India within a week of global launch!
- **Moto e4 plus** and **Xiaomi Mi6 Plus** launched in India on July 12, 2017
- **Nokia 6** launched in India on Aug 23, 2017; sold out in a minute!
- **HP** announces **Sprocket printer** priced \$ 99 on Sep 14, 2017
- **Twitter** allows 280 characters from Sep 27

Indian IT Companies

- **Infosys** stock price saw loss of 9.2% in a single day on Aug 18, 2017 after CEO Sikka resigned suddenly; Nandan Nilekani is back as Infosys Chairman on Aug 24, 2017; **TCS** and **Infosys** post good results for the first quarter - April to June 2017 - \$ 4.6 Billion and \$ 2.6 Billion revenue, respectively
- **Reliance Jio** launches "free" feature phone, low cost bundles for Voice, data and video on July 20, 2017
- **SoftBank** invests \$ 2.5 Billion in **Flipkart** in Aug 2017; **Ola** gets \$ 250 million funding from SoftBank
- **Tata Sons** goes private on Sep 21, 2017
- **Polaris** subsidy **Intellect** bags **GeM** - **Government Electronic Marketplace** contract for 5 years on July 25, 2015; this would replace the legendary DGS&D; GeM would be the portal for all Government purchases totaling Rs 5-7 Lakh Crores (\$ 100 billion)
- 400 top executives of **Cognizant** take VRS on Aug 5, 2017
- **Titan** joins hands with **Amazon** to reach US markets
- **Patni** inks JV with **Amazon** in Sep 2017
- **Wipro** gets \$ 100 M order from Munich Re in Sep 2017;
- **Mahindra** tests driver-less tractors in Sep 2017

MNC Companies in India

- **Google** acquires Bangalore-based **HalliLabs** founded by StayZilla founder Pankaj Gupta on July 13, 2017; launches India-focused mobile payment App **Tez** on Sep 18, 2017
- **Amazon** to hire 1,000 R&D staff in India; starts the biggest (400,000 sqft) storage space in Hyderabad Int'l Airport on September 8, 2017; with this Amazon has 3.2 million cubic feet of storage in India
- **Accenture** India launches a huge innovation center in Bangalore on July 26, 2017
- **Suzuki** starts preparation for Electric Car factory in Gujarat India in September 2017
- **Boeing** sets up R&D Center focused on IOT Analytics and AI in BLR in Sep 2017
- **PayPal** opens innovation labs in Chennai and Bangalore in Aug 2017
- **Honda** commissions its Narsapur, Karnataka facility (world's largest facility for two-wheelers) - with 2.4 million capacity and 7,000 direct jobs and 15,000 indirect jobs – in Aug 2017
- **LinkedIn** launches India-made **LinkedIn Lite** in 60 countries in Aug 2017

Education & Research

- Joydeep Bagchi-led **Indian scientists (IUCAA and IISER Pune)** discover **Saraswati Super-cluster** (4 billion light years away) in July 2017
- **SWAYAM platform** for **online courses** and **free to air TV channels** launched on July 9, 2017 (Guru Purnima) by the Ministry of Human Resource Development
- Lok Sabha passes the bill giving the newly started **IIIT's in PPP mode the status of Institutes of National importance** on July 19, 2017; with Presidential assent it got Gazette notified in Sep 2017
- Lok Sabha passes **IIM Bill** giving more autonomy on July 27, 2017

People

- The high-profile Infosys CEO **Vishal Sikka's** sudden resignation on Aug 18, 2017 caused flutters in the Indian IT industry
- India-born **Sundar Pichai** CEO of Google joins Alpha (parent company of Google) Board on July 24, 2017
- **Aarti Subramaniam** is the first-ever digital officer for Tata Sons, appointed on July 12, 2017
- **NSE** gets a new **CEO** Vikram Limaye on July 17, 2017
- **Arvind Panagariya Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog** announces his decision to quit and join back Columbia University on Aug 1, 2017
- **Vasant Narasimhan** PIO (Person of Indian Origin) is the new CEO of global pharmaceutical giant **Novartis**
- **Japanese PM Abe** visit India and launches bullet train project between Mumbai and Ahmedabad on Sep 14,

2017; **Swiss President** visits India Sep 2-4, 2017

- **Five Navy women** start on round the world in 160 days on Sep 10, 2017
- **PV Sindhu** is the first Indian woman ever to win Korean Open badminton match on Sep 17, 2017

Telecom

- **Reliance Jio** launches "free" feature phone and low cost bundles for Voice, data and video on July 20, 2017

Startup scene

- **Baiju** acquires **TutorVista** and **Edurite** on July 3, 2017 from **Pearson**
- **BookMyShow** acquires recommendation engine **Burrrp** on July 3, 2017
- **FreeCharge** acquired by **Axis Bank** on July 26, 2017 signs of consolidation in mobile wallets space
- **Ola** raises another \$ 400 million from Tencent on July 26, 2017
- **SoftBank** invests \$ 2.5 Billion in Flipkart
- **Matrimony** IPO oversubscribed on Sep 14, 2017

Interesting Applications and Apps

- **Aaykar Setu** App launched by Income Tax department on July 10, 2017
- **Zoho One** offers 35 applications as a professional single App for Rs 1,000 per month per employee starting July 25, 2017
- **Microsoft** launches messaging App **Kaizala** in India in July 2017 with AP Government as its first customer
- **Government of India** launches mother app **Umang** in July 2017
- **SBI** launches chat bot in September 2017

Interesting numbers

- **Sensex** (BSE index) went past 32,000 for the first time on July 13, 2017; **NIFTY** crossed 10,000 mark for the first time in its 21 year history on July 25, 2017
- **Foreign Exchange reserves** cross \$ 400 billion for the first time on Aug 18, 2017
- With 241 million users **India is No 1 for Facebook** (USA has 240 million) on July 13, 2017; **WhatsApp** reaches **one billion daily users** (with India as No 1 the No 1 country) by July 2017
- **Uber** completes 500 million rides in India in 4 years by July end
- As per TRAI Press Release 73/2017 dated Sep 13, 2017 **Indian telecom subscriber base** touched 1210.71 Million (1186 Million mobile and 24 Million fixed-line) on July 31, 2017

Professor Sowmyanarayanan Sadagopan is the Director of IIIT-Bangalore. These are his personal views. He has been writing about IT in India for two decades, with monthly columns in Times of India (1999 – 2003), Financial Express (2004 - 2007), IT Magazine (2008 - 2011) and IEEE India Newsletter (2012 onwards). He can be reached at ss@iiitb.ac.in

Facebook admits to having up to 270 million fake accounts: Facebook has admitted to having up to 270 million fake accounts, according to its third quarter earnings in 2017. In the report, Facebook said around 2-3% were "user-misclassified and undesirable accounts". The company also admitted that 10% accounts are duplicates of real users which is almost double of 6% estimate in the last quarter.

Fake version of WhatsApp surfaces on Google Play Store: A fake version of WhatsApp, named "Update WhatsApp Messenger" has surfaced on Google Play Store under the developer name, "WhatsApp Inc." The fake app has been downloaded one million times, while the original WhatsApp has one billion users. The fake version also copied the colour theme and look of the original WhatsApp app.

Teen sells 25th place in queue for iPhone X for \$500: Teenager Lee Cselko, sold his 25th place in a queue for iPhone X in Australia for \$500. The 16-year-old McDonald's employee wrote about the offer on a white board he placed on a chair. Asking people to message him on his Instagram handle, he said that anybody who buys the spot will "get the phone 100%".

A Delhi court on Thursday directed Google India to remove content allegedly containing hate speeches against the Sikh religion and its gurus within a week.