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IT in August 2014

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General

- **Planning Commission**, the supreme decision-making body for six decades, goes into history on August 15, 2014
- Prime Minister dedicates guided missile vehicle of the Indian Navy **INS Kolkata** to the Nation on August 16, 2014
- On August 28, 2014 Prime Minister launched the new financial inclusion drive **Jan Dhan Yojana**- that attempts to provide bank accounts to 75 million poor families, who still do not have a bank account; on the very first day 15 million bank accounts were opened! State Bank opened 2 million accounts. The Government plans to have RuPay debit card and Rs 30,000 Life Insurance built into this “zero minimum balance” account that will be used for direct benefit transfer
- In **Commonwealth Games** held in Glasgow during July 23 - August 3, 2014, India finished at the 5th position (among the 7 Nations) with 64 medals, next only to England, Australia, Canada and Scotland
- India takes a tough stand in World Trade Organization (**WTO**) talks in Bali that concluded on July 31, 2014 but agrees to re-engage on August 1, 2014
- Asian Development Bank (**ADB**) agrees to give up to \$ 9 billion loan to India over three years
- *Lok Sabha* (Indian Parliament) passes **Judges Appointments Bill** on August 13, 2014
- **Chennai** celebrates 375th Foundation Day on August 21, 2014
- **Yoga Guru BKS Iyengar**– who managed to take Yoga to millions across the planet - passed away at the ripe age of 95 after a brief illness on August 20, 2014; **Richard Attenborough** who directed the film **Gandhi** – award-winning critically acclaimed film that had a profound impact on millions - passed away at the ripe age of 90 on August 25, 2014

Technology

- On July 31, 2014, Danish scientists at Technical University, Denmark achieved a new record in communication - **43 Terabits/second speed** (5.5 Terabytes/second or transmitting the entire contents of 1 TB hard disk in one-fifth of a second), using single fiber specially made by NTT, Japan

Markets

- Indian currency takes the steepest fall (in six months) of 68 paise in a day to 61.18 against USD on August 1, 2014
- **HP** is back to No 1 position in the Indian PC market with 29.5% market share (according to IDC) based on April - June 2014 sales data
- **Apple** stock price crossed \$ 100 on August 20, 2014 (after seven-for-one stock split in July 2014)
- **HDFC Bank** is the most valued brand in India, as per the first-ever BrandZ exercise in India announced on August 20, 2014
- **Amazon** buys Video gaming company **Twitch** (that enables video gamers to allow others to watch the

game online) for \$ 970 million on August 26, 2014

Products

- **Microsoft** launches the most affordable **Lumia 530 phone** at Rs 7,000 in India on August 13, 2014
- **Amazon** Point-of-Sale (PoS) terminal **Local Register** launched in USA on August 13, 2014, that would compete with the likes of **Square**, and allow smart-phones and Tablets to become a PoS
- Indian mobile handset brand **Intex Technologies** introduces open-source Mozilla-based smartphone **Cloud FX** at Rs 1,199 on August 25, 2014
- **Flipkart** launched five Intel processor-based **WDigiFlip Pro Tablets** in ₹ 5,999 to 15,999 price range on August 26, 2014 (on the heels of launching the first-ever Tablet launch by Indian e-Commerce major in July 2014)
- **Alcatel** launches **OneTouch** smart phones in India and expects to sell 500,000 units in 2014

Indian IT companies

- **HLL, TCS, L&T, Sun Pharma, Bajaj Auto** in the **Top 100 World's Most Innovative companies** (Forbes 2014)
- Indian handset major **Micromax** is selling more mobile phones in India today than Korean big-wig Samsung as per August 2014 data!
- Bangalore-based Analytics start-up **MuSigma** (founded by Dhiraj Rajaram) set to join the India-based companies in Billion Dollar club soon; its market value set to cross \$ 5 billion in August 2014
- Indian e-commerce company **Snapdeal** touches \$ 1 billion mark in 2.5 years in August 2014 (a year ahead of the original plan)
- Tata SIA Airline "**Vistara**" takes off on August 11, 2014
- NOIDA (Delhi) based e-waste company **Attero** gets 100 Crores funding in August 2014

MNC companies in India

- Made in India product, co-created by **SAP Labs India** with Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai "**Project Genomics**" with visualization and analytics tools for bio-informatics sector goes global in August 2014
- **Microsoft** decides to set up DataCenter in India in August 2014
- **Honeywell** plans to invest Rs 1,400 crores in its second campus in Bangalore
- **Mercedes Benz** India R &D Centre to have 50 data scientists soon
- Chinese handset major **Xiaomi** planning R & D unit in Bangalore

People

- **Arun Murthy** (key contributor to **Hadoop**), **Surabhi Gupta** (key contributions to search engine **Airbnb**), **Swatee Singh** (contributor for to **American Express "My offers"**), **Vijay Subramanian** (key contributions to **Rent the runway**) – are four Indians the global list of 20, a maiden attempt by **Fortune** Magazine to chronicle the leaders in **Big Data / Analytics**
- **Infosys** new CEO **Dr. Vishal Sikka** starts his innings on August 1, 2014
- **Prime Minister Modi** visits Nepal during August 3-4, 2014
- **Dilip Khandelwal** takes charge as **SAP Labs India Managing Director** on August 5, 2014
- **Steve Ballmer** steps down from **Microsoft Board** in August 20, 2014

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Education & Research

- Professor **Manjul Bhargava** of Princeton University wins **Fields Medal**(highest honour given to young mathematicians less than 40 years old) on August 13, 2014 for contributing “powerful new methods in the geometry of numbers”; Professor **Subhash Khot**in the Computer Science Department of New York University’s Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences) wins **Rolf Nevenlinna Prize** for outstanding contributions to mathematical aspects of Information Sciences including Computer Science; both the winners are Persons of Indian origin
- **Tatas** give 95 crores to **IIT Bombay Design Center** in August 2014

Infrastructure

- Prime Minister dedicates 765 KV Solapur Raichur transmission line on August 16, 2014
- **Mumbai Metro** (Colaba - Bandra - Andheri line) sees ground breaking ceremony on August 26, 2014
- Government talks of 10,000 MW of **wind energy** every year for the next five years

Interesting applications

- **Mobile banking** sees increased traction; ICICI Bank alone posts ₹2645 crores worth transactions in April – June quarter (compared to ₹ 5,741 crores transactions in the whole of the year 2012-13)
- **OlaCabs** taxi hailing **App** tweaks the process and gets average waiting time to 10 minutes!
- Government okays ₹1,00,000 crores **Digital India project** in August 2014; SIM card to be linked to AADHAR as part of this project
- Several telcos start offering SMS-based basic banking services in India using USSD; Prime Minister launches this as part of the larger financial inclusion initiative **Jan Dhan Yojana**

Interesting numbers

- **Telecom subscriber** base on June 30, 2014 stood at 942.95 million with 914.92 million mobile subscribers and 28.03 million wire-line subscribers (with net addition of 4.77 million mobile subscribers and net reduction of 0.16 million wire-line subscribers in June 2014) (TRAI Press Release No. 53/2014 dated August 20, 2014)
- **India’s Foreign Exchange** on August 22, 2014 was at \$ 318.6 billion (RBI)
- **Indian Rupee** stood at 60.58 against USD on August 29, 2014 (RBI)
- On Aug 29, 2014 **BSE Sensex** and **NSE NIFTY 50** (Indian stock market indices) were at 26,638 and 7,954 respectively (Reuters)
- Government talks of 10,000 MW of wind energy every year for the next five years
- **Flipkart** creates 400 crore patis among employees, thanks to Employees Stock Options
- Half of **TrueCaller’s** 70 million subscribers are in India
- **WhatsApp** active user base crosses 600 million in August 2014!
- **Average speed on Bangalore** roads drop from 35 Kmph in 2005 to 20 Kmph in 2010 and to 9 Kmph in 2014!



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