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IT in March 2015

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General

- Government's reform process gets into motion with Insurance and Coal Ordinance replaced by Bills in Lok Sabha on March 4, 2015 and finally making them into Law on March 19, 2015; Land Acquisition Bill unfortunately could not be made into a Law
- USA eases L-1B visa norms on March 24, 2015; likely to benefit Indian software companies
- J & K gets a new Government on March 1, 2015; Mufti Mohammed Sayeed is the new Chief Minister
- RBI gets free hand on March 5, 2015 to do inflation targeting; talks of 2-6% for the next 2 years
- Supreme Court quashes Section 66a of IT Act paving way for more online freedom on March 24, 2015
- Kashmir flood during the last week of March causes havoc
- Australia retains World Cup for the fifth time on March 29, 2015

Technology

- Solar Impulse 2 - the world's first Solar-powered plane to go around the globe - lands in Ahmedabad on March 11, 2015 and takes off from Varanasi on March 19, 2015
- ISRO launches successfully IRNSS-1D, the fourth in the series of seven navigation satellites on March 28, 2015
- IBM announces its decision to invest \$ 3 billion in IoT (Internet of Things) Research on March 31, 2015

Products

- Samsung launches S6 during MWC (Mobile World Congress, Barcelona, Spain March 2-5, 2015); Microsoft launches low cost Lumia 640
- Apple launches Apple Watch on March 9, 2015; set to reach customers on April 24, 2015
- Swatch (world's largest watch manufacturer) announced the launch of low cost smart watches with payment capability using NFC in the year 2015 on March 13, 2015
- Samsung S6 India launch started on March 27, 2015
- Microsoft launches Surface 3 (Windows Tablet) on March 31,



Markets

- On March 4, 2015 RBI reduces Repo rate by 0.25% cheering markets; NIFTY crosses 8,500, Sensex crosses 29,500 for the first time; Sensex goes past 30,000 for the first time on March 4, 2015
- NASDAQ touches 5,000 after a 15-year gap on March 5, 2015
- HP acquires wireless mobility company Aruba Networks (founded by Hyderabad-boy KeertiMelkote) for \$ 2.7 billion on March 2, 2015
- NXP and FreeScale merge to become a \$ 40 billion enterprise - a large M&A activity in micro-electronics space - on March 2, 2015
- Ola acquires TaxiForSure on March 5, 2015
- Reliance Infra acquires 25% stake in Pipavav Defence for Rs 1,164 Crores on March 5, 2015
- Apple joins Dow Jones on March 6, 2015
- Coal auction generates more than Rs 1,00,000 crores (with more than Rs 10,000 crore upfront payment) in March 2015
- E-Commerce major Snapdeal acquires mobile recharge platform Freecharge for Rs 2,800 Crores on March 11, 2015, and acquires majority stakes in financial distribution platform RupeePower on March 31, 2015
- Philips sells lighting unit for \$ 2.8 billion on March 31, 2015

Indian IT companies

- Infosys gets five year contract from Dutch logistics company TNT Express on March 5, 2015
- Airtel gets honored in World Mobile Congress for its inclusive web “One Touch Internet” on March 5, 2015

MNC IT companies in India

- Ericsson gets an extension of Airtel deal on March 5, 2015
- Shell starts global IT Centre in Bangalore on March 6, 2015
- Amazon puts into action its decision to invest in India; puts ₹1,125 Crore investment in March 2015: signs for 1.3 million square feet of space
- Bosch set to hire 3,200 engineers in India in the year 2015
- Ford plant in Sanand in Gujarat goes on stream on March 26, 2015; with investment of \$ 1 Billion and spread over 460 acres, the plant with capacity to produce 240,000 cars and 270,000 engines per year would generate 10,000 jobs

Education & Research

- Database pioneer Professor Michael Stonebraker (currently at MIT) is the winner of 2014 ACM Turing Award (announced on March 25, 2015)

- Cryptographer Professor Dan Boneh of Stanford University is the 2014 ACM Infosys Foundation Award in the Computing Sciences (announced on March 31, 2015)
- Andhra Pradesh sees IIT and IISER in Tirupati and IIIT in Chittoor getting launched on March 28, 2015

Telecom

- 3-G Spectrum allocation started on March 4, 2015; gets ₹ 60,000 crores on day 1, ₹ 65,000 crores on Day 2; ₹ 77,000 Crores on Day 3; ₹ 86,000 Crores on Day 4; ₹ 94,000 Crores on Day 5; ₹1,02,000 Crores on Day 9; ends on March 25, 2015 at ₹ 1,10,000 Crores

Infrastructure

- Mysuru gets a new Maharaja on February 23, 2015
- Arvind Kejriwal becomes Chief Minister of Delhi on February 11, 2015
- PunitRenjen becomes Deloitte global CEO in February 2015

Telecom

- For issuing SIM cards government starts using AADHAR-based KYC (Know Your Customer) in February 2015

Infrastructure

- Hubli Airport is back in action with a longer runway with SpiceJet re-starting their flight from Bangalore on March 1, 2015
- NTPC commissions Unit V of Barh project in Bihar (660 MW capacity) on March 4, 2015;taking NTPC installed capacity to 43,800 MW
- Coal auction bags ₹ 2.07 Lakh Crores on March 9, 2015
- Bangalore Namma Metro underground section testing starts on March 12, 2015

Startup scene

- Ola acquires TaxiForSure on March 5, 2015
- Quikr to join billion dollar club in 2015

People

- India-born Nobel Laureate VenkiRamakrishnan to head Royal Society UK
- IMF President Lagarde visits India during March 16-18, 2015
- Twitter CEO Dick Costalo visits India in March for the launch of Prime Minister Modi's offline "Samwad" (direct communications) using Twitter platform
- Professor Michael Stonebaker is the winner of 2014 ACM Turing Award

- ACM Infosys Award goes to Professor Dan Boneh of Stanford
- Prime Minister Modi and India's Nobel Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi in Fortune Magazine List of 50 of the world's greatest leaders in 2015
- Architect of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew passed away on March 23, 2015
- Chinese billionaire Jack Ma visits India on March 31, 2015
- SAP co-founder Klaus passed away on March 31, 2015

Interesting applications

- Ola launches Ola cash wallet-based auto service in March 2015; can use the App to order food items from nearby restaurants
- Digi-Locker App from Government of India gets more acceptance
- Indian Railways shutting down some Reservation counters in Bangalore as more passengers move to on-line train booking
- Twitter CEO kicks off "Samwad" for Prime Minister and others to communicate to citizens using Twitter platform
- Indian Railways and NPCI offer RuPay cards on March 23, 2015

Mobile Apps

- Housing.com puts out a massive 4-page Ad in newspapers on March 7, 2015
- Muthoot launches WebPay for gold purchases on March 4, 2015
- HDFC Bank to offer non-POS based card payment
- AIDMK party uses App to organize political party in March 2015
- Internet App-based food retail offer economical meal -FreshMenu, Spoonjoy and Eat.io are interesting examples.
- Launched on March 11, 2015, ICICI Bank Pockets connects to multiple banks!
- Hop email (launched in March 2015) reformats email into Message format for easy viewing
- Twitter launches Periscope on March 26, 2015

Interesting numbers

- Telecom subscriber base on February 28, 2015 stood at 987.30 million with 960.58 million mobile subscribers and 26.72 million wire-line subscribers (with net addition of 8.24 million mobile subscribers and net reduction of 0.15 million wire-line subscribers in February 2015); of the 987.30 phone subscribers 578.75 were in urban area, while 408.55 were from rural area (TRAI Press Release No. 28/2015 dated April 10, 2015)
- India's Foreign Exchange on March 27, 2015 was at \$ 341 billion (RBI)
- Indian Rupee stood at 62.50 against USD on March 31, 2015 (RBI)
- On March 31, 2015 BSE Sensex and NSE NIFTY 50 (Indian stock market indices) were at 27,957 and 8,491 respectively (Reuters)
- Apple might earn 93% of mobile handset profit!
- Fashion goods eCom company Myntra claims 90% is generated via mobile phones; shuts down the website on March 31, 2015
- IT department has ₹ 1.2 Lakh Crores refund
- 25% of the total 7 million square feet of warehousing space in India is used by e-commerce companies
- Inflation reaches -2.06%, the lowest since 2005
- BIAL welcomes its 15 Millionth passenger of the year on March 24, 2015
- With 88 million members BJP is the largest political party in the world even surpassing Communist Party of China by March end



Words of Wisdom

*My own prescription for health
is less paperwork and more running
barefoot through the grass.*

- Leslie Grimmer

*Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's
not a day when you lounge around doing nothing, it's when
you've had everything to do and you've done it.*

- Margaret Thatcher