

**What's hot in IT
An Indian Perspective
December 2019**

Science & Technology

- RFID-enabled **FASTag** for toll collection across **NHAI** (National Highway Authority of India) finally took off on December 15, 2019 (with minor glitches)
- **History was made** with the **first electric-powered commercial flight** taking off safely from Vancouver, Canada on December 11, 2019; Australian firm **Magnix** designed and retro-fitted an old Beaver Aircraft; **Greg McDougall** founder and Chief Executive of **Harbour Air** flew the aircraft; the flight landed only 15 minutes. While the current Lithium battery will have a range of just 160 KM, in the years to come, electric powered planes with less environmental pollution is likely to be a reality

Policy

- Indian Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) pass the historic **CAB** (Citizen Amendment Bill) on December 11, 2019; unfortunately much of December saw widespread opposition to CAB
- **Supreme Court** rejects all appeals against the **Ayodhya verdict** on December 12, 2019; hopefully, there will be all round peace in Northern India

Special events and Milestones

- As on December 1, 2019, **Samsung India** is a **\$ 10 Billion** enterprise!
- **Company Law Tribunal** decides the termination of **Cyrus Mistry** as **Chairman of Tata Sons** (the 100+ Billion Dollar enterprise that is much respected in India for more than one century) illegal, after three years, leading to much confusion
- **Accenture** creates history in December 2019; its headcount crosses 500,000 (with 150,000 in India)
- **Jharkhand State election results** go against BJP on December 23, 2019
- **Boris Johnson** was elected as the **Prime Minister of United Kingdom** with a resounding victory on December 12, 2019; with the new Parliament voting for it, **Brexit** to become a reality by January 31, 2020
- **Bangalore Airport** commissions its **2nd parallel runway** on December 6, 2019

Products

- **Germany's 5G** contract for **Huawei** also sees uncertainty (after **UK**)
- **Amazon** launches **Fire TV** in India with **Onida** partnership in December 2019
- **Nokia** and **FlipKart** (Wal-Mart owned) launch **Nokia TV** in India on December 12, 2019
- **HMD Global (NOKIA brand owner)** launches Nokia 2.1 in Cairo on December 5, 2019; India launch on Dec 15, 2019
- **Xiaomi** launches Note 8 in India on December 5, 2019

Markets

- **Aramco's creates history** with its **IPO** becoming the largest ever IPO on December 4, 2019; on Day 2 of its listing (December 12, 2019), its market value touches \$ 2 Billion surpassing the market value of Apple, Microsoft and Google

Indian IT Companies

- **Cognizant** decides to **lay off 350 Senior Management personnel** to cut costs on December 23, 2019
- **TCS** bags \$ 2 Billion order from Europe's largest pension funds consolidator **Phoenix** group on November 12, 2019

MNC IT Companies in India

- **Marvell** expands its **Bangalore R & D Center** in December 2019
- **Google** signs up for **450,000 square feet** office space with **Simpli Work** in **Gurgaon** on December 12, 2019
- As on December 1, 2019, **Samsung India** is a \$ 10 Billion enterprise!
- **Uber India** sets up Center of Excellence in **Vishakhapatnam** in Andhra Pradesh on December 1, 2019

Telecom

- The woes of telecom sector continues; Vodafone Idea Chairman KM Birla even talks of "hanging up", if there are no bailouts, on December 6, 2019
- Telecom companies increase tariff by up to 40% on December 1, 2019

People

- India-born and educated - an IISc & IITM Alum - Dr **Sethuraman Panchanathan** appointed as the Chief of **NSF** (National Science Foundation), USA on December 20, 2019
- India-born (IIT-KGP Alum) **Monisha Ghosh** appointed as CTO of the powerful **FCC** (Federal Communications Commission) of US
- **Greta Thunberg** is **Time Magazine's Person of the Year 2019**
- India-born **Google CEO Sundar Pichai** becomes the CEO of its parent company **Alphabet** on December 2, 2019; Founders Sergey Brin & Larry Page leave management control!

Start-ups scene

- **Reliance Jio** acquires Hyderabad-based, Jasminder Gulati founded **SaaS start-up NowFloats** for \$ 20 Million on November 12, 2019
- High-end Cybersecurity consulting company **Lucideus** (founded by **Saket Modi**) gets \$ 7 Million on December 1, 2019

Interesting Apps

- **FASTag** (RFID reader-based toll collection) becomes mandatory on all toll booths of NHAI (National Highway Authority of India) effective December 15, 2019, hopefully avoiding wasteful delays

Interesting numbers

- **IndiGo** operates **1,500 flights a day** by December 2019; it crossed 1,000 flights a day in December 2017
- **Maruti Suzuki** crosses 20 Million sales mark on December 4, 2019
- **GST collections** cross Rs 1,00,000 Crores in December 2019

IT in India

- India's stock market index **Sensex** touches 41,810 for the first time on December 20, 2019
- India's **Foreign Exchange reserves** cross **\$ 454 Billion** for the first time in December 27, 2019

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