

# What's hot in IT An Indian Perspective - April 2020

## Science & Technology

➤ **Vaccine** for Covid-19 is finally around the corner; **Oxford University** team announced the start of **human trial** on **April 23, 2020**; Pune-based **Serum Research Institute** (one of the seven organizations selected by Oxford team for manufacture) is getting ready to manufacture the vaccine; if trials go well, SRI may produce 5 Million per month for 6 months and 10 million for another 6 months (India is among the largest manufacturers of vaccines, globally); several such initiatives are happening globally

➤ Several Science & Technology Institutes in India are coming together and offering solutions to contain Covid-19 menace; several start-up are rising to face the challenges too



## Products

➤ **Google Meet** will be free from **May 1, 2020**; competes with the highly popular **Zoom** meeting solution; **Microsoft Team** also gets traction with new features

➤ **Apple** launches iPhone SE 2 at \$ 399 on **April 15, 2020**

➤ **OnePlus** launched its **OnePlus 8** and **OnePlus 8 Pro** on **Apr 14, 2020**



## Markets

➤ Amidst so much bad news, there is a silver lining; **Facebook** acquires 9.99% stake in **Reliance Jio** for Rs 42,000 Crores on **April 20, 2020**; this partnership will use Reliance Retail network to transform millions of small-time Kirana stores

➤ **Covid-19** and Oil Price dropping to sub-zero level in Futures market, there is blood bath in the global markets in **April 2020**

➤ **Indian Rupee** breaches 76 against USD on **April 7, 2020**; rebound to 74 on **April 30, 2020**



## Special events and Milestones

➤ **Coronavirus Disease** (officially **Covid-19**) continues to cause havoc throughout the month of April

➤ As of **April 30, 2020**,

- ❖ Globally, there were 31,93,886 cases and 2,27,638 deaths
- ❖ USA has the largest share with 10,92,328 cases and 63,538 deaths
- ❖ India had 33,050 cases and 1,074 deaths

➤ **Spain, Italy, UK and France** has more than 24,000 deaths

➤ **India** had the first death on **March 13, 2020** (in Karnataka); the death toll climbed to 100 on **April 6, 2020** and 1,000 on **April 18, 2020**

➤ **USA** had the first death on **March 3, 2020**; the death toll climbed to 100 on **March 18, 1,000** on **March 28, 10,000** on **April 8, 20,000** on **April 13, and, 50,000** on **April 29, 2020**

➤ India announced its first **lockdown** during **March 25 to April 14**; extended to **May 3**; likely to get extended further; **partial opening** of services started on **April 20**; Secretaries to the Government started attending offices from April 13 and Deputy Secretary level officers started attending offices from **April 15**

➤ **Chief Minister of Gujarat tests positive** on **April 15**

➤ **UK Prime Minister** tests positive, get admitted into hospital, had to be treated in ICU and returns home on **April 15**, causing considerable anxiety; he resumed work on **April 29, 2020**

➤ In an interesting development, India sends malaria drug **HCQ** to **United States, United Kingdom** and **Israel** in **April 2020**

➤ **Oxford University** starts human trial of its vaccine; Pune-based Serum Research Institute is one of the agencies contracted by Oxford University team for its manufacture

➤ Chinese City of **Wuhan** (where Corona Virus originated) opens up after 76 days of lockdown on **April 14, 2020**

➤ US GDP contract by 4.8% the steepest ever quarterly loss; there is panic everywhere in the global markets

➤ Oil price goes sub-zero in the "futures market" thanks to drastic demand reduction due to "lockdown" in most parts of the world



## Higher Education

➤ On **April 22, 2020**, 5 of the older IIT's decide to pull out of **Times Higher Education 2020 Rankings**, citing lack of transparency

➤ In **Times Higher Education Impact ranking** based on UN Millennium Development Goals, **IIT-KGP** gets 57<sup>th</sup> rank globally (the only Indian Institute in Top 100)

## People

➤ President's Secretary and former IAS Officer **Sanjay Kothari** was appointed as **CVC** (Central Vigilance Commissioner) on **April 25, 2020**

➤ India-born (Andhra Pradesh) and educated (B Tech from IIT Kanpur) **Dr Arvind Krishna** takes charge as **IBM CEO** on **April 6, 2020**

➤ **Pravin Rao**, COO, **Infosys** is the new **Chairman** of **NASSCOM**; **Rekha Menon** of **Accenture** is the **Vice Chair**; both effective **April 6, 2020**



## Policy

➤ On **April 22, 2020** **Supreme Court** held the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Governments' decision to **reserve 100%** of the teaching jobs to Scheduled Tribes in notified tribal areas **unconstitutional**; in another ruling on **April 29, 2020**

**Supreme Court** also held that **NEET will be the sole test** for admissions to **Medical colleges** and stopped the separate test for admission to **CMC Vellore**

➤ With the consolidation in Public Sector Banks, **Allahabad Bank, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Syndicate Bank** and **United Bank of India** become history on **April 1, 2020**

## Telecom

**Airtel** gave \$ **1 Billion** (Rs 7,500 Crores) 4G order to **Nokia** on **April 28, 2020**

## Indian IT Companies

➤ **Facebook** acquires 9.99% stake in **Reliance Jio** for Rs 43,574 Crores on **April 22, 2020**

➤ **TCS** posts a **top line** of Rs 39,946 Crores and a **bottom line** of Rs 8,049 Crores on **April 15, 2020**; its **headcount** on **March 31, 2020** stood at 448,464

➤ **Infosys** posts a **top line** of Rs 23, 267 Crores and a **bottom line**

line of Rs 4,335 Crores on **April 20, 2020**; its **headcount** On **March 31, 2020** stood at 242,371

➤ **Wipro** posts a **top line** of Rs 15,710 Crores and a bottom line of Rs 2,330 Crores on **April 15, 2020**; its **headcount** on **March 31, 2020** stood at 182,886

➤ None of them provided guidance for **2020-21** amidst chaos created by Covid-19

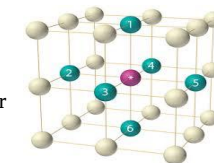


## Interesting numbers

➤ **Ramayan**, the TV Serial directed by Ramanand Sagar broadcast on DD National sets a world record with 77 Million viewers on **April 16, 2020**

➤ **Income tax department** processes Rs 4,250 Crores of **refunds** in a week (**April 6-12, 2020**); in the same period **Railways** settle **refund** of Rs 1,490 Crores!

➤ **Covid-19 shocker on the economy** - as of **Apr 29, 2020** **GST collection** for **March 2020** is just Rs 28,309 Crores (as against Rs 1.13 Lakh Cr for **March 2019**)!



## Interesting Apps & Applications

➤ **Uber** launches **Uber-Medic** focused on healthcare workers in **April 2020** in India (following its UK experiment earlier)

➤ On **April 15, 2020** **Aarogya Setu** (Covid-19 related) App creates history; **crosses 50 million in 13 days**, the fastest growing mobile App globally

Professor **Sowmyanarayanan Sadagopan** is the **Director** of IIIT-Bangalore. These are his personal views. He can be reached at [ss@iiitb.ac.in](mailto:ss@iiitb.ac.in). He has been writing on "What's hot in IT" from an Indian perspective continuously from 1997; Times of India, Financial Express and IT Magazine Carried the monthly (and yearly columns) till 2016; **IEEE India** has been carrying the quarterly columns since 2017.