

What's hot in IT An Indian Perspective – Dec 2020

Science & Technology

- **Delhi Metro** commissions fully **driver-less trains** on Magenta line (28 Dec 2020)
- **L&T** prints 700 square feet house in Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu taking just 10.6 hours of machine time using **3-D Printing technology** - an important milestone with a huge potential for India (25 Dec 2020)
- **OneWeb** launches 36 satellites (of the planned 648 LEO satellites that will offer Internet to rural areas by Dec 2021) (20 Dec 2020)
- **ACM India Early Career Researcher Award** (funded by Persistent Systems) goes to **Dr Saket Saurabh** of **IMSc (Institute of Mathematical Sciences)** (22 Dec 2020)
- **Infosys Science Prize 2020** goes to
 - ❖ **Dr Hari Balakrishnan** of MIT (**Engineering & Computer Science**)
 - ❖ **Dr Prachi Deshpande** of CSSS, Kolkata (**Humanities**)
 - ❖ **Dr Rajan Sankaranarayanan** of CCMB (**Life Sciences**)
 - ❖ **Dr Sourav Chatterjee** of Stanford (**Mathematical Sciences**)
 - ❖ **Dr Arindam Ghosh** of IISc (**Physical Sciences**)
 - ❖ **Dr Raj Chetty** of Harvard (**Social Sciences**) (19 Dec 2020)
- Indian American **Raja Chari** is among the 18 strong team selected by NASA as “potential Men / Women on the Moon in 1924” (18 Dec 2020)
- **Britain's MHRA** (Medicine & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency) **approves Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine** under emergency use approval (2 Dec 2020); 90-year old **Margaret Keenen** of UK is the first human being to be administered Covid-19 vaccine (8 Dec)



Markets

- **Sensex** touches 47,000 (18 Dec 2020)
- **Google** acquires **Neverware**, New York City based software company with its tool **CloudReady** that converts old Windows PC into Chromebooks (16 Dec 2020)
- **IRCTC IPO** over-subscribed (12 Dec 2020)
- SaaS-based CRM software company **Salesforce** acquires **Slack** in a mega deal (\$ 27.7 Billion) (2 Dec 2020)



People

- Prime Minister **Modi** (along with Japanese & Australian Prime Ministers) conferred “**Legion of Merit**” by US President Trump (21 Dec 2020)
- IIT-Kanpur Alum **Dr Aravind Krishna**, current IBM CEO elected as **IBM Chairman** (16 Dec 2020)
- Noted Indian Scientist **Dr Roddam Narasimha** of “Flosolver fame” passed away (14 Dec 2020)
- US President-elect **Biden** and Vice-President elect **Harris** are TIME Magazine's Person of the year 2020 (10 Dec 2020)
- Indian pharma major **CIPLA** Chairman **Yusuf Hamied** creates history; **Cambridge University** names its Chemistry Department after him till 2020; 25 Nobel Laureates are associated with this Department has (1 Dec 2020)



Policy

- **UK EU** sign **Free Trade agreement** as UK makes its **BREXIT** exit (25 Dec 2020)
- Union Government losses **CAIRN** case in international litigation; appeals against **Vodafone** arbitration to Singapore Court (25 Dec 2020)
- **Farmers' opposition** to Government's new **Agricultural Laws** disrupt life in Delhi for weeks in **December 2020**
- **Lucknow Municipal Bonds** listed on BSE - the first City in Uttar Pradesh to do so - (2 Dec 2020)

Startup scene

- **DailyHunt** gets **Unicorn** status with **Google** funding (21 Dec 2020)
- **Zomato** gets \$ 600 Million infusion (18 Dec 2020)
- Online education start-up **upGrad** acquires **Rekrut** (15 Dec 2020)
- **[24]7.ai** hires 3,500 in India in 2020
- **Aman Gupta** founded **boAT** (India's wearables company) became the 5th in the world in this emerging market After **Apple, Xiaomi, Huawei** and **Samsung** (and tied with **Fitbit**), as per IDC Report (2 Dec 2020)

MNC Companies in India

- **E & Y** to hire 9,000 techies in India in 2021 to boost its digital capabilities (24 Dec 2020)
- **Google** launched **Machine Learning Utilities for Research in Indian Languages (MURIL)** to help the R & D ecosystem in Indian languages (16 Dec 2020)
- **Fiat Chrysler** setting up \$ 150 Million digital hub in **Hyderabad** (15 Dec 2020)
- **Nokia** plant in Chennai outskirts starts manufacturing 5G Telecom gear in India (4 Dec 2020)



Products

- **ICICI Bank** rolls out **iMobile Pay** that works across Banks (9 Dec 2020)



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Special events and Milestones

- Jammu Kashmir had peaceful **Elections** for DDC with good participation; results were out on **23 Dec 2020**
- **Chennai December Music season** goes virtual (**15 Dec to 15 Jan**)
- **Google, Intel, Dell, Citrix** form "**Cloud Alliance**" (**18 Dec 2020**)
- **Mail, YouTube** services disrupted on **14 Dec 2020**
- **HDFC Bank IT outage** leads to regulator (RBI) intervention (**2 December 2020**)
- In **US Presidential Elections** held on 3 Nov 2020 the Electoral College seals the win for Joe Biden (**16 Dec 2020**)
- **Coronavirus Disease** (officially **Covid-19**) in India seems to have slowed down in considerably December, though the Caseload crosses 10 Million in December
 - ❖ US plans to administer vaccines to **20 Million Americans by 31 Dec 2020**; could complete only 1 Million in the first 3 days
 - ❖ India sets up the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration (**NEGVAC**) to roll out vaccines; 10 Million health workers are the first priority; Government plans to administer vaccines to 300 Million people; as a pilot project, Government is connecting identified 85,634 cold storage points in 28,947 places in 4 States using innovative technology under Phase 1 of the plan (**4 Dec 2020**)
 - ❖ **Moderna** gets US FDA approval under emergency authorization approval (**20 Dec 2020**)
 - ❖ **US FDA** approves Pfizer vaccine (18 Dec); President-Elect Biden takes the vaccine (**23 Dec**)
 - ❖ **UK** approves Pfizer's vaccine (**2 Dec 2020**); 90-year old **Margaret Keenen** of UK is the first human being to be administered Covid-19 vaccine (**8 Dec 2020**)

Covid-19 picture in December 2020

- India's positivity rate is down and R-value below 1.0 from **24 Sep 2020**
- **Un-lock 7** starts (**2 Dec 2020**)
- On 27 Dec 2020, cases/deaths stood at
 - ❖ Global: 78 Mililon and 1.7 Million
 - ❖ India: 10 Million and 147,000
 - ❖ USA: 18 Million and 320,000
- Death count



- ❖ **India** 1st case (**13 Mar**), crossed 100 (**6 Apr**), 1,000 (**29 Apr**), 10,000 (**16 Jun**), 50,000 (**17 Aug**) and 100,000 (**3 Oct**), 125,000 (**7 Nov**), 147,000 (**24 Dec**)
- ❖ **USA** 1st case (3 Mar), crossed 100 (**18 Mar**), 1,000 (**28 Mar**), 10,000 (**8 Apr**), 50,000 (**25 Apr**), 100,000 (**29 May**), and, 200,000 (**25 Sep**), 300,000 (**16 Dec**)
- ❖ **Global** 1st case (**11 Jan**), crossed 100 (**28 Jan**), 1,000 (**11 Feb**), 10,000 (**20 Mar**), 50,000 (**3 Apr**), 100,000 (**12 Apr**), 500,000 (**30 Jun**), and, 1 Million (**29 Sep**), 1.5 Million (**3 Dec**)

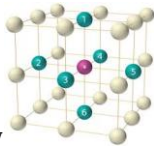
Indian IT Companies

- **L&T** prints 700 square feet house in Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu taking just 10 hours of machine time using **3-D Printing technology** - an important milestone with a huge potential for India (**25 Dec 2020**)
- **Infosys** bags the largest ever mega IT services order of \$ 3.2 Billion over 8 years from **Daimler** for (**23 Dec 2020**)
- **Wipro** bags IT services order of \$ 700 Million over 5 years from German retailer **Metro** (**23 Dec 2020**)



Interesting numbers

- **FASTag** collects Rs 80 Cr in a day involving 5 Million transactions (**25 Dec 2020**)
- **GST** collection goes past **Rs 1 Lakh** Crores indicating economic revival
- **Foreign exchange reserves** touched a new high of \$ **581 Billion** (**27 Dec 2020**); **March to November 2020** saw an increase of more than \$ 100 Billion! It was \$ 457 Billion in **Jan 2020**



Telecom / Infrastructure

- **4G spectrum auction** cleared by Union Cabinet (**16 Dec 2020**)
- Foundation stone laid for the New Parliament Building (**10 Dec 2020**)
- **BSNL Sylo** launch satellite-based IoT detection service (**8 Dec 2020**)
- Union Cabinet approves Project **WANI** to set up one million public W-Fi hotspots by **Dec 31, 2021**

Higher Education

- Union Government hikes its share (11% to 60%) of **Post Metric Scholarships** to nearly 40 Million SC students (**23 Dec 2020**)
- **JEE** to be conducted four times a year from **2021** (it was just one exam during **1967 to 2017**, conducted twice in **2018, 2019 & 2020**)
- **IIT Kanpur** starts **Sustainability Engineering Department** and a Department on **Cognitive Sciences** in **December 2020**
- Indian pharma major CIPLA Chairman **Yusuf Hamied** creates history; **Cambridge University** names its Chemistry Department after him till 2020; 25 Nobel Laureates are associated with this Department has (**1 Dec 2020**)

Interesting Apps & Applications

- **FASTag** to be mandatory for toll collection on NHAI highways from **1 Jan 2021**
- Dept of Post launches **Dak Pay App** (**15 Dec**)
- **RTGS** goes 24/7 from **15 Dec 2020**
- **HDFC Bank's** IT outages lead to **regulator (RBI) intervention** (**3 Dec 2020**)



Professor **Sowmyanarayanan Sadagopan** is the **Director** of IIIT-Bangalore. These are his personal views. He can be reached at 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.