

India sets quarterly smartphone shipment record, with Samsung and Apple winning big

Article

India reported its highest first-quarter smartphone shipments in Q1 2021, with more than 38 million units shipped—representing an increase of 23% year over year (YoY), **according to a**

report from Counterpoint. Overall, the report shows steady growth for the world's **second-largest** smartphone market, but those figures come with a glaring caveat: the pandemic. India is currently facing a gruesome recurrence of the coronavirus, **reporting** as many as 350,000 new infections per day. Fallout from the pandemic's resurgence and the potential reimposition of lockdowns could slow consumer smartphone demand in the coming quarters, according to Counterpoint senior research analyst Prachir Singh.

Samsung and Apple made considerable gains in India's smartphone market. Samsung grew its shipment market share from 16% in Q1 2020 to 20% Q1 2021. Counterpoint attributes Samsung's 52% YoY growth in shipments to its focus on budget devices and an early launch of the Galaxy S21. Meanwhile, Apple—which has **historically** failed to gain traction in India outside of the premium device market—saw a staggering 207% YoY shipment growth, and for the first time shipped more than 1 million units in two consecutive quarters. Apple's success, per Counterpoint, is partly attributable to aggressive offers on its iPhone SE and expanded manufacturing resulting from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's **Make in India** initiative.

Growing distrust of Chinese brands among Indian consumers could benefit devices manufactured in India. Despite the longstanding dominance of Chinese device-makers in India's smartphone market, Chinese manufacturers face **renewed** public **backlash** following mounting political tensions between the two countries last year. Anti-China **sentiment** has led to calls from segments of the public and some politicians to boycott Chinese goods, which may already be affecting shipments of Chinese-made smartphones. According to a survey conducted by consulting firm CyberMedia Research **viewed** by Quartz, 1 in every 4 retailers in nonmetro areas in India claimed they had stopped stocking Chinese phones. Xiaomi, which already manufactures a portion of its devices in India, underwent efforts to **emphasize** its Indian manufacturing amid the public backlash. Despite those efforts Xiaomi's shipment market share still declined from 31% in Q1 2020 to 26% in Q1 this year. The growing boycott campaign could ultimately open the door for non-Chinese devices-makers like **Samsung** and **Apple**, both of which have ramped up device manufacturing in India as a result of economic incentives included in the Make in India initiative.

Inida Sets Quarterly Smartphone Shipment Record

% of shipment market share by device-maker, 2020-2021

Oppo



Realme



Vivo



Samsung



Xiaomi



Other



■ Q1 2021

■ Q1 2020

Source: Counterpoint, 2021

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