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Today's View

Robotics for Crop Harvesting

At present, declining labour availability is one of the major challenges in agriculture. The industry is projected to experience a 6 percent decline in agricultural workers from 2014 to 2024. In order to address such challenges in the labor force, automation through AI is emerging as a significant theme. According to **Technavio**, Global Artificial Intelligence Market in Agriculture Industry to Grow at a CAGR of 23% through 2021.

Harvesting accounts for 20% of all agricultural work. Harvesting Robots will help increase the productivity of the farm labour by many folds and minimise the peak labour risks farmers face. It will also improve the farm labour income, improve productivity of the farmers and will help to improve the overall economy of farming.

Various Robotics Startups are pushing the boundaries in this space. For instance, **Harvest CROO Robotics** has developed a robot to pick and pack the strawberry which can harvest 8 acres in a single day and replace 30 human laborers. Similarly, **Panasonic** has demoed tomato picking robot for green houses which can select and pick tomatoes of certain colors even at night by using a flash. Moreover, **FFRobotics** is developing the first fully automated mechanical picker for fresh fruits grown for the consumer market. It offers advanced software for fruit identification and classification per Grower's pre-set criteria for harvesting selection.

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A third of Diwali purchases done online

Every one in three purchases during the Diwali festive season was done online, as per a report by Visa. Indian shoppers spent Rs 153 billion during the Diwali shopping season, with credit card spend growing faster than debit card year on year.

Source – The Economic Times

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Date – 29th Nov 18

Furthermore, to prevent the damage of strawberry crops while harvesting, R&D Company **Octinion** has developed the robot having 3D computer vision enabling it to only pick strawberries that it won't bruise. Likewise, Japanese company Shibiya Seiki has also developed robots in collaboration with **Japan's National Agriculture Food Research Organization (NARO)** for strawberry crops.

The peak labour problem is also an important issue across the cotton belt of India and states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Telengana and others. To overcome this, Bengaluru based start-up **Green Robot** has developed **GRoboMac**, a farm robotics harvester. The computerized vision of the robot detects and locates the precise 3D coordinates of the bloomed cotton from the images of the cotton plant which enable robotic arm to pick the cotton and avoids picking any other contaminant.

India, though one of the biggest producers of agricultural products, has an average farm productivity of only 33 per cent of that of farms the world over. In order to increase this productivity, AI agribots are poised to present new opportunities for the agricultural sector so that farmers can get more remuneration from the same piece of land -- with less labour.

Today's News

Suspension of Aadhaar verification to hit lending of small Fintech players

Fintech players, especially online lenders in the personal and consumer loans segment, are likely to face slowdown in business following the Supreme Court order that prevents private companies from seeking Aadhaar data for e-KYC and e-signatures.

Following the apex court's order, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), an umbrella organisation for all retail payments in the country, has suspended both e-KYC (know your customer) and e-signature-based National Automated Clearing House (NACH) for enterprises to collect recurring payments from customers digitally.

Source – BusinessLine

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Omidyar Network leads seed investment in Fintech startup Bon

Bonfleet Solutions Pvt. Ltd, which runs Fintech start-up Bon, has raised a seed round of funding led by impact investment firm Omidyar Network, founder Bhasker Bosky Kode siad. The company has received Rs 7.8 crore from investors that also include early-stage investment firm Axilor Ventures and Better Capital's AngelList India Syndicate. It will use the money for expansion and to upgrade its technology, he added. Smita Aggarwal, who leads strategy and investments for Omidyar Network's financial inclusion initiative in India, said that the firm contributed two-thirds of the amount.

Source – VCCircle

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of G Balakrishna and Pankaj Tadas

SUN Mobility ties up with electric vehicle fleet operator SmartE

Electric vehicle solutions firm SUN Mobility tied up with the country's largest electric vehicle fleet operator SmartE. As per the tie-up, SmartE's fleet of electric three-wheelers will utilize SUN Mobility's charging infrastructure, including battery swapping system, across Delhi/NCR.

Source – The Economic Times

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Deep learning has become the go-to method for problem solving

Deep learning has been one of the most popular substrates of the machine learning family, in the last decade or so. The reason for its popularity is its sky-high accuracy. The 'deep' part of deep learning comes with more than one layer in its architecture, along with which a number of advantages are introduced, as it is then able to classify data more and more accurately and can learn better and so have even found their application in self-driving cars.

Source – Analytics India

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Unilever VC, Kalaari may back ecommerce startup Shop101

Social ecommerce startup Shop101 is in advanced stages of raising $10-12 million from the venture capital arm of consumer goods giant Unilever, homegrown investor Kalaari Capital and other investors, people directly briefed on the developments said.

Source – The Economic Times

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AWS Taps Partners for Industrial IoT, Machine Learning Apps on CBRS Band

Invent, Athonet, Ruckus Networks, Federated Wireless are launching a fully cloud-native private mobile network solution for developers, ISV's, telecom operators, public sector and enterprises for quick deployment of Industrial IoT applications such as real-time surveillance, smart meters and worker safety monitoring. The solution takes advantage of CBRS shared spectrum to deliver high performance, scalable and secure IIoT services powered by this private network.

Source – Light Reading   READ MORE

India sees more cyber security startups with rise in attacks

India has seen a sharp rise in cyber security start-ups as nearly 50 product firms set up shops in the past few years, says a report by Belong. This uptick in cyber security start-ups has been primarily attributed to an increasing number of cyber-attacks in the country across industry sectors. Belong has stated in the report that cyber-attacks have increased by nearly 5 % to 53000 in 2017 from 50362 in 2016 in India and the number was 44679 in 2014. The country currently has an estimated 200 such cyber security start-ups and half of them being located in Mumbai and Pune as banking and financial services sector continues to create largest demand for cyber security solutions. Bengaluru has the third largest number of such start-ups after Mumbai and Pune.

Source – The Economic Times   READ MORE

Tech Mahindra, Cisco open digital technology experience centre

Tech Mahindra and Cisco have today jointly launched a state-of-the-art digital experience centre in Bengaluru. The facility, located at Tech Mahindra's campus here, will showcase use cases for digitization in manufacturing, retail and smart cities such as asset visibility and yard tracking, city surveillance and incident management, smart lighting, waste management, environmental monitoring, city Wi-fi, machine connectivity and other areas.

Source – The Economic Times   READ MORE

Paytm's unlisted owner One97 tops Rs 1 lakh crore in valuation

The value of One97 Communications, the parent entity of India's largest payment services provider Paytm has crossed Rs 1 lakh crore in the unofficial market, said four brokers dealing with the unlisted shares. One97 shares changed hands at roughly Rs 18,200 a piece this week, running up nearly 60% in the last six months after Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway bought a stake in the company, they said. The firm's value in the unofficial market has raced past the market capitalisation of listed blue-chips like IndusInd Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Titan, HDFC Standard Life Insurance and Godrej Consumer.

Source – The Economic Times   READ MORE

BSNL launches digital payments platform for customers

BSNL has launched a new digital payment platform for its landline, broadband and fiber to home customers that will enable customer to pay the bills at nearby BSNL retailer outlets. The company said that the country wide retailer network of more than 40,000 outlets has been integrated on this platform and the new system is an addition to the existing country wide network of customer service centers and online payment portal.

Source – TechCircle

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Coursera set to train professionals on AWS services

Coursera has tied up with Amazon web services to render education on cloud as the technology has been growing in demand over the years. According to the company blogpost, the course is a starting point for learners with a working knowledge of IT infrastructure concepts who are interested in learning how to apply AWS services to their roles and businesses.

Source – The Economic Times

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Snapchat launches Discover in India with 10 new partners

Snap Inc., makers of the popular social camera app Snapchat, has launched a localized version of Discover, for the growing community of Indian Snapchatters, through partnerships with nearly a dozen media brands.

Source – The Economic Times

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