



## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Capital Float buys personal fin firm Walnut for \$30 million

AI and IoT focused venture fund pi Ventures lands \$6 million from UK's CDC

Global e-commerce firms look to buy domestic retailers to up India game

A Rs 500 loan for the paan wala? RBI says this registry will enable 'sachet-sized loans'

## Today's View

### Smart Energy Management

Energy affects us all, and so does its effective storage and management. As per **Statista**, by 2024, energy storage requirement is estimated to reach 81 gigawatt hours around the world. To meet this upsurge in storage demand, energy utility companies are integrating innovation like artificial intelligence (AI) into its operations.

Many start-ups are also providing AI based solutions to the energy industry. For instance, California-based **Stem** has developed **Athena**, which uses AI to map out energy usage and allow customers to track fluctuations in energy rate to use storage more efficiently.

Further, AI is also paving the way in grid management. As grids progressively gather energy from different sources like wind, solar, and electricity, operating, these systems has become more complex. AI's ability to analyze massive datasets can bring stability and efficiency to these new information sources. For example, **Siemens** has released a software package to operate grids autonomously known as **active network management (ANM)**. ANM tracks how a grid interacts with different loads of energy and tweaks its adjustable parts to increase efficiency.

Failure Management is an inevitable task of the energy sector. Use of AI to detect failures before they happen can save money, time, and lives. Austin based **SparkCognition** is using a combination of analytics, sensors, and

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### Potential loss of \$50 billion shoppers after first purchase hits e-comm hard

Here's the 50 million conundrum for India's ecommerce — regular online shoppers in India are around 50 million, but almost the same number of Indians have stopped online shopping in the last 12 months.

**Ecommerce's 50-50 Trend**

**50 m** Active online shoppers

**54 m** Online shopping dropouts

These are first-time users who are mostly from Bharat

Language barrier major reason	Complex user interface another
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Source – The Economic Times

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Date – 21<sup>st</sup> Aug 18

operational data to predict when critical infrastructure could fail. Similarly, energy giant **AES Corporation** has announced its plans to move into AI based solutions to improve awareness, efficiency, and maintenance of company's asset including solar farms and grid systems.

Moreover, companies can offer solutions to optimize usage by monitoring the energy consumption behavior of individuals and businesses. For example, **Alphabet's Nest** adapts to user behaviour to reduce energy consumption. It learns habits of its occupants and adjusts temperatures accordingly. According to Nest, its technology has saved customers between 10% and 12% on heating bills. Likewise, Spain's **Nnergix** uses machine learning technology to forecast atmospheric conditions and weather, including the amount of hourly photovoltaic energy produced at power plants.

Although AI is in its initial stages of implementation, it is poised to transform the way we manage the energy. The gains in reducing carbon footprint due to efficient energy management are certainly welcome.

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## Today's News

### Capital Float buys personal fin firm Walnut for \$30 million

Fintech lender Capital Float has acquired personal finance management startup Walnut for \$30 million in a cash-and-stock deal that it expects will help strengthen its new consumer-lending business. "We loved the new platform named Walnut Prime, which is a credit line product, and (Walnut's) acquisition will help us strengthen the consumer-lending vertical that we started a few months ago," said Gaurav Hinduja, cofounder of Capital Float, which is known mainly for lending to small and medium businesses.

Source – The Economic Times

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### AI and IoT focused venture fund pi Ventures lands \$6 million from UK's CDC

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and IoT-focused early stage venture fund pi Ventures has raised \$6 million from the UK Government's development finance institution CDC Group.

While the fund had initially targeted to close at \$30 million, it will now close at a higher number, having already raised \$31 million so far, according to founding partner Manish Singhal Singhal said that while the fund will continue to invest in AI and IoT startups, it will also look at blockchain and will announce an investment soon. pi Ventures has announced six investments so far — SigTuple (data intelligence in healthcare), NIRAMAI (non-invasive, non-touch, non-radiation approach to detect breast cancer), ten3T (medical grade wearable device), Zenatix (data-driven energy efficiency company acquired by Hero Electronix), CustomerSuccessBox (customer success platform for B2B SaaS companies) and Locus.sh (logistics optimisation platform).

Source – The Economic Times

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

### Paytm launches its own AI cloud for India

One97 Communications, the parent entity of Paytm has announced the launch of its AI Cloud computing platform "Paytm AI Cloud for India" for developers, startups and enterprises.

The platform is mainly aimed at offering business-centric apps for organizations that need high-quality solutions for cloud computing, automate their workflow, easy payments, messaging and customer engagement without the hassle of managing hardware and software.

Source – The Economic Times

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### Techstars accelerator to invest \$120,000 each in 10 Indian startups

Global entrepreneurial mentoring network Techstars has announced plans to open its first mentorship-driven accelerator in Bengaluru to nurture Indian startups in the emerging technologies.

Source – The Economic Times

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### Flipkart talks to Liv.ai to take on the likes of Alexa

In a bid to compete with Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant, Flipkart is in advanced talks to acquire artificial intelligence company Liv.ai, according to two sources familiar with the development. The transaction could see the homegrown online retailer shell out around \$40 million for Liv.ai, one of them said, adding that the transaction is "in the final stages".

Source – The Economic Times

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## Global e-commerce firms look to buy domestic retailers to up India game

Global retailers are looking to enter into joint ventures or acquire stakes in domestic businesses to achieve bigger scale through multi-channel operations, say consultants.

US-based e-commerce giant Amazon is in talks to buy a stake in Aditya Birla Retail and Chinese online major Alibaba is discussing a joint venture with Reliance Retail (JV), according to reports on Monday. "The retail players are realising that larger platforms and partnerships with large players are required to make a mark in this market given the complexities in logistics, demographics, seamless customer service and widespread distribution. We are also seeing the next round of consolidation in retail," says Rajat Wahi, a partner in Deloitte Consulting.

Source – Business Standard

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## A Rs 500 loan for the paan wala? RBI says this registry will enable 'sachet-sized loans'

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has called for legalising and enactment of public credit registry (PCR) in India to overcome organisational and confidentiality constraints. PCR is an extensive database of credit information accessible to all stakeholders to help banks distinguish between bad and good borrowers.

"It is desirable to have a special comprehensive legislation, overriding the prohibitions contained in all other legislations on sharing of information required for the PCR. Otherwise, all such legislations will have to be amended separately, providing an exemption for sharing of information with PCR," said RBI's Deputy Governor Viral Acharya in a speech.

Source – MoneyControl

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## UPI will improve creditworthiness of banks and retailers: Moody's

A report by rating agency Moody's has said that the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) will provide lenders hitherto unavailable financial data on small merchants which will improve creditworthiness of both small borrowers and banks. Bankers expect this data to open up new avenues for credit and lead to formalisation of the micro sector.

The National Payment Corporation of India, launched an upgraded version of the UPI called UPI 2.0. "UPI 2.0's new features include a higher transaction limit, an ability to generate digital invoices before making a payment, an ability to block funds and make payments later and the linking of overdraft accounts of merchants.

Source – The Times of India

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## GDPR Challenges Indian Firms While FinTechs Eye Charters With Caution

Three months in, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation still stymies some firms seeking to comply with new rules and regulations governing data protection and privacy.

Consider India, where EY estimates in a recent survey that in India, companies are finding it a challenge to navigate GDPR.

Source – Pymnts

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## Finzy raises another one million in a pre-series A round

Online peer to peer lending startup Finzy has raised \$2.3 million in its pre-series A round, including the first tranche of \$1.3 million raised in March this year. The company did not disclose the names of the investors but just mentioned that senior professionals of the banking and financial services industry and successful entrepreneurs participated in the round.

Source – The Economic Times

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## Shadowfax receives \$22 m in Series C funding

Shadowfax, India's leader in the online-2-offline (O2O) logistics segment, on Wednesday, said it has closed \$ 22 million Series C funding led by NGP Capital. Qualcomm Ventures (the investment arm of Qualcomm Incorporated), Mirae Asset and existing investor, Eight Roads Ventures, also joined the oversubscribed equity round.

Source – BusinessLine

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