



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Google Pay's roadmap to become a formidable Fintech player in India

Amica Financial Technologies raises \$24 million in funding

Fintech firms hire 700,000 people who lost jobs in slowdown-hit sectors

Western Union launches its digital platform WU.com in India

Today's View

Disrupting Healthcare Financing

India continues to witness amongst the lowest public health budgets in the world at just over 1% of GDP which reflects public healthcare delivery system's performance - be it in the form of decaying infrastructure, shortage of skilled staff or unavailability of medicines. Adding to the woes, 80% of India's population is not covered under any health insurance scheme as per **National Sample Survey (NSS)**. This has resulted in low hospital capacity of 0.9 hospital beds per 1,000 people, as per **Association of Healthcare Providers**, as against the WHO's recommended level of 5 hospital beds per 1,000 people.

Around the globe, where governments face challenges or fail to provide some cushioning in the welfare domain, Fintechs are taking it upon themselves to do their bit. In the U.S., **HealthExpense** lets users pay what they owe in just one click, ensuring that patients conveniently send out payments in a reasonable timeframe, or establish payment plans so that they can begin paying off their debt before they have to face a collection agency.

Talking about insurance, **FitSense** brings together a smartphone and wearable technology to offer insurers a deeper window into the consumer's life, in turn, helping consumers negotiate better insurance rates. It can provide insurers insights such as, consumer's BMI, stress level, and even sleeping patterns.

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Govt flags risks to payments through social media companies

The government is approaching the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) over the risks in allowing social media platforms such as WhatsApp into the digital payments space in light of the recent hack of the messaging app.



Source – The Economic Times

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Date – 4th Nov 19

In the corporate sector, **SimpleInsured** is helping small businesses in selecting the right 'group health insurance' product for their employees while other start-ups like **PokitDok** are leveraging cloud-based API platforms to streamline healthcare transactions. Even health insurance brokers are leveraging insurance plan optimisation tools from companies like **Dynamis Software Corporation** to intuitively evaluate plan options with employers.

Back in India, Fintechs such as **Affordplan** and **Arogya Finance** are trying to improve access to healthcare financing. Affordplan resolves patient's liquidity and capital concerns by helping them plan, save, and pay for upcoming non-emergency medical procedures, enabling consumers save as much as 15% of the overall treatment expense. Arogya Finance, on the other hand, provides medical loans to those who are traditionally believed to be un-bankable. The platform makes use of a risk assessment tool allowing them to finance patients who neither have income proof nor collateral to offer.

Fintechs are helping solve the traditional problem of negligible access to healthcare finance for the less privileged. Coupled with disruptive technologies like virtual reality and robotics, the future of healthcare looks even more promising, leading towards a healthier future.

Today's News

Fintech firms hire 700,000 people who lost jobs in slowdown-hit sectors

Online marketplaces, foodtech aggregators, and fintech firms have hired about 700,000 people, temporarily, in the festive season. Most people who have been hired are those who lost their jobs in other industries, such as automobile, hit by a slowdown.

The tenure of such jobs is about 6-8 months, with Amazon and Flipkart creating the primary demand for labour. Across the supply chain, the two e-commerce giants have created 140,000 temporary jobs to meet challenges of last-mile connectivity and customer support in the festive season.

Source – Business Standard

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Google Pay's roadmap to become a formidable Fintech player in India

Google is eyeing multiple Startup investments and acquisitions as it looks to bolster its FinTech play in India through its payments app Google Pay. The tech giant is in early-stage talks with start-ups such as retail tech firms Perpule and Peel-Works, and a few others in the insurance and brokerage space for a potential investment or acquisition, according to two people familiar with the matter. "They are looking at firms in the payments and POS space that will help them support their offline payments," said the first person cited above, requesting anonymity. "The conversations are at a fairly early stage — Google has expressed an interest, and some initial talks have taken place."

Source – Entrackr

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of G Balakrishna and Manish Kulkarni

CoHo plans to raise up to Rs 100 crore targets 1 lakh beds in 3 years

Co-living startup CoHo is in talks with strategic investors and financial institutions to raise Rs 70-100 crore to expand its presence in the country, and reach one lakh beds over the next three years, its founder and CEO Uday Lakkar said. "We are actively looking to raise capitals from strategic players and pure-play financial institutions for funding our expansion plan. We are targeting to reach one lakh beds over the next three years," Lakkar said. The company's propriety technology stack will play a huge role in rapid growth, driven by machine learning, Internet of Things (IoT), AI, data and predictive analytics around consumer behaviour, he added.

Source – The Economic Times

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Amica Financial Technologies raises \$24 million in funding

Amica Financial Technologies, an upcoming digital retail bank founded by Citrus Pay cofounder Jitendra Gupta, has received \$24 million in its maiden funding round. The funding is backed by a long list of institutional investors including Greyhound Capital, 3One4 Capital, Germany's Rocket Internet, venture capital funds Matrix Partners and Sequoia Capital. Gupta, a former PayU India managing director, is among a growing tribe of second-time entrepreneurs who have attracted big bucks from marquee investors even before officially launching their companies.

Source – The Economic Times

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Western Union launches its digital platform WU.com in India

A leader in international cross-currency money movement and payments – Western Union launched its digital platform – WU.com in India on Monday. Launched in association with one of the leading banks in India – YES BANK, the costumers, can now send or pay money globally 24*7 through WU.com. Through the digital platform, the costumers can conclude their transactions to send money into accounts across the countries across several parts of the world from their national bank accounts. The costumers can send money and can make payments in North American, Europe, Middle East, Asia Pacific and parts of Latin America.

The recent development comes after Western Union decided to expand its services to the emerging markets as part of its strategy to expose the company to new growth areas. To enable international payments faster, the company is leveraging its core cross-border assets including technology systems, global settlement capabilities, compliance and network.

Source – Pressroom Today

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Uber restructures its India business to improve operational efficiency

US-based ride-hailing giant Uber has been overhauling its business operation in India for the past couple of months. The ride-hailing firm has moved its entire India business to Uber India System and recently shifted its operation reporting to Amsterdam based Pierre-Dimitri Gore-Coty, who as vice president heads the company's Europe, Middle East and Africa business.

The move is to foster more synergies in the company's similar business and product markets such as India and sub-Saharan African countries. The company has been restructuring its business to improve its operational efficiency and its large clients-base in the country. According to sources close to the development, Uber is trying to localise and improve its operations. The old business structure had been acting as a roadblock for the US-based ride-hailing firm and its corporate business, they added.

Source – Entrackr

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Regional language focused startup Lokal raises \$3 million funding

Lokal, a news and classifieds platform focused on regional languages, has raised \$3 million funding from a clutch of investors that include 3one4 Capital, Y Combinator, RB Investments, SOMA Capital and existing investor India Quotient. The round also saw participation from Twitch cofounder Kevin Lin, Xiaomi Indonesia head Alvin Tse, South Korea-based VC firm Starling Ventures, US-based media tech firm XRM Media and tech investment firm I2BF Global Ventures. Started by Jani Pasha and Vipul Chaudhary in June 2018, Lokal provides district-level local news, jobs, classifieds and matrimonial ads along with local information like weather, vegetable prices, gold prices and contact information of doctors and police stations in Telugu and Hindi languages. The Bengaluru-based Startup plans to use the funds raised to improve its product, expand its team and enter new markets apart from strengthening its presence in existing markets.

Source – The Economic Times

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BeYouPlus raises \$3.2 million in funding

BeYouPlus, a startup that is aiming to standardize beauty treatments by partnering with local clinics, has raised \$3.2 million in funding led by IvyCap Ventures, along with participation from Madison Capital and Singapore Angel Network. The startup focuses on dermatological treatments and works with local clinics to set up procedure rooms that treat customers at fixed prices. Present largely in the Delhi-NCR region, BeYouPlus plans to use the funds to aggressively expand across geographies.

Source – The Economic Times

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Amazon approval for \$200 Mn Future Retail deal faces CCI hurdle

In a move that could potentially delay Amazon proposed stake acquisition in Future Retail, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has sought more information regarding the deal from US-based e-commerce marketplace.

In certain overlapping segments and areas of operation of the parties, the combined market share exceeds the threshold specified in the combination regulations, CCI said last month as Reuters report. Besides, the competition watchdog has asked Amazon over 40 questions related to the deal, adverse impact on the competition and its businesses. In August, the Jeff Bezos-led firm had agreed to make an equity investment in Future Coupons Limited for acquiring a 49% stake comprising both, voting and non-voting shares.

Source – Entrackr

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