

As the world's population grows, the amount of farmland per capita shrinks. According to estimates by the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, farmers will have to sustainably increase their yields by about 50% by the year 2050 in order to feed everyone. To achieve this, the agricultural sector needs innovative crop protection and technology solutions. Weeds compete with crops like wheat and corn for sunlight, water and nutrients. This leads to lower yields. To combat these undesired plants as effectively as possible, herbicides are generally applied over large surface areas, covering crops and fields in the process. **Bosch** and **Bayer** are working together to develop Smart Spraying technology that uses camera sensors to distinguish between crops and weeds. This will enable crop protection agents to target the weeds and protect the environment.

Engineers from **Microsoft** along with scientists from **ICRISAT** use artificial intelligence to determine the optimal planting time in India. An application using Microsoft Cortana Intelligence Suite also monitors the condition of the soil and selects the necessary fertilizers.

Aiming to increase the quantity and quality of products, this cutting-edge movement makes sustainable growth for everyone working in the agriculture realm. With the burgeoning population, smarter techniques to increase yield and productivity are welcome.

Today's News

WhatsApp Pay: SC tells RBI, NPCI to respond in three weeks

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) are expected to file their response on WhatsApp Pay's data localisation compliance status over the next three weeks following a Supreme Court directive on Wednesday.

This comes when WhatsApp Pay is expected to be given the final nod for a full-scale roll-out after its parent firm Facebook invested \$5.7 billion in Jio Platforms, where it is using WhatsApp for a commerce initiative. WhatsApp Pay has been stuck in beta-mode for two years now, with its services restricted to 1 million users in India--the largest market for the messaging app with 400 million users.

Source – Times of India

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Samsung Pay all set to launch debit cards in the US this summer

As Samsung Pay celebrates its 5th anniversary, the company has now decided to foray into the debit card market. "Samsung Pay is evolving to help you do even more. This summer, Samsung and its partner SoFi are bringing a debit card and cash management account to the Samsung Pay experience" said Sang Ahn, Vice-President and GM of Samsung Pay, North America Service Business, Samsung Electronics.

What is Samsung Pay? Launched in 2015 by the world's second largest mobile phone manufacturer Samsung, Samsung Pay helps to simplify payments for its customers. They only need a Galaxy phone to swipe up from the home button and authorize the payment through its highly secure fingerprint identification system.

Source – The Economic Times

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3 startups win \$100,000-contest to offer digital payments on feature phones

Three startups have won a \$100,000 prize to create a feature-phone-based digital payments solution in a challenge hosted by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), CIE.CO and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

While Gupshup won the first prize and will receive \$50,000 in cash. Minkville finished second and will get \$20,000. A sum of \$10,000 will go to Tonetag, the second runners-up.

Source – Money Control

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Join the online payment wagon with these openings at PhonePe

India is going through a new mobile revolution which will change the way we manage our money on the go. There are prominent changes happening in the technologies related to the bill payment sector and financial transaction, with pervasive mobile apps and websites gaining more ground. One such prominent and popular player in the fintech sector is Bengaluru-based PhonePe.

Founded by Burzin Engineer, Rahul Chari, and Sameer Nigam, PhonePe is a mobile payments app that allows you to transfer money instantly to anyone, by using just their mobile number.

Source – YourStory

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Wistron has \$165 million for India plant expansion

Wistron plans to invest an additional ₹1,300 crore (\$165 million) at its upcoming facility outside Bengaluru, a senior company executive said, as the Taiwanese contract manufacturer expects more business from its clients such as Apple. ET reported recently that the iPhone maker was examining the possibility of shifting nearly a fifth of its production capacity from China to India and scaling up its local manufacturing revenue, through its contract manufacturers, to around \$40 billion over the next five years.

It is expected to be through contract manufacturers Wistron and Foxconn. The Wistron plant in Narasapura, around 65 kilometres from the state capital, received ₹1,600 crore in September, up from a planned ₹900 crore. The fresh investment will see that swell to a total ₹2,900 crore.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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SaaS startup SirionLabs raises \$44 mln from Tiger Global, Avatar Growth Capital

Gurugram-based software-as-a-service (SaaS) provider SirionLabs has raised \$44 million, as a part of its Series C round, led by Tiger Global and Avatar Growth Capital. With this round, the total funding raised by SirionLabs' stands at \$66 million till date, with earlier rounds led by Sequoia Capital India.

The company also announced the launch of its new Seattle-based technology center, and appointment of Amol Joshi as chief revenue officer, Anu Engineer as chief technology officer, Mahesh Unnikrishnan as chief product officer and Vijay Khera as chief customer officer. Founded in 2012, SaaS-platform SirionLab helps enterprises with outsourcing and procurement services and provides contract management software.

Source – *LiveMint*

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How MSME technology innovations can build a green India

This year, the coronavirus has brought the world to a standstill. However, restricted movement of people, the shutdown of factories, and the absence of vehicles on roads have also breathed a new life into nature. It is extremely important for us to now think about a greener and sustainable future. It is now that we need to come up with innovative solutions to save our planet from dying.

“Maybe sooner or later we will come out of COVID-19 crisis, but it must be remembered that another catastrophic crisis is waiting to happen and that is climate change. The only remedy which can save us from the terrible impacts of climate change is green innovation. On this day, we should all come forward and pledge to support green innovations and companies that are working on developing such solutions,” said Vivek Singh, Head, IP Drafting Filing and Prosecution at Sagacious IP, during the Virtual IP Conference held on April 28, 2020.

Source – *YourStory*

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After cloud kitchen tryst, OYO eyes ready-to-eat food segment

Hospitality firm OYO is looking to enter the ready-to-eat food segment despite an unsuccessful foray into the cloud kitchen business early this year, sources told Moneycontrol. It has partnered with manufacturers on a revenue-sharing basis.

“OYO has realised that cooking meals and maintaining its consistency where the kitchen service is not good is very difficult. Therefore, it is planning to further explore the scope in the ready-to-eat category.,” said one of the sources.

Source – *Money Control*

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Startups may not qualify to secure collateral-free loans

Most technology ventures in the country are unlikely to qualify for loans under an ambitious government scheme rolled out on Wednesday which makes available Rs.3 lakh crore in collateral-free automatic loans, according to people in the startup ecosystem.

They are hoping finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman will announce additional measures to address the concerns of startups. Under the scheme unveiled on Wednesday, businesses will be able to avail of a credit line from banks and non-banks up to 20% of their outstanding credit as of February 29.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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