



## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

**Banks issued 1.6 crore new debit cards during peak lockdown**

**Blended-office version to redefine the workplace**

**Samsung likely to move part of smartphone production to India**

**Urban India's reverse migration from mobile to desktop**

## Today's View

### Augmented Reality for Industries

Tech-savvy users are well-aware about how Augmented Reality (AR) is potentially changing the gaming and entertainment landscape. However, it is not just limited to entertainment; its applications extend to the industrial sector as well. The adoption of AR technology in industries is growing so rapidly that its market is expected to cross \$117.4 billion by the year 2022.

Augmented reality is poised to radically improve manufacturing and logistics. In manufacturing, AR can superimpose holographic images and instructions on to industrial objects, which is immensely valuable for educating workers on how to use large machinery or specialized devices. In logistics, AR applications could streamline the time it takes to identify packages and determine their route and destination. For instance, an AR mobile app or wearable device can project information about the type of goods being transported, each package's weight and fragility.

Variety of companies have already come up with AR-based apps for industrial employees. For example, Industrial AR Company **Atheer** has created an enterprise AR application that provides remote subject matter calling, access to contextual documentation and resources, step-by-step task guidance and barcode scanning — all of which can be directly transmitted to an on-site employee's smart glasses. On the other hand, German logistics firm **DHL** is testing a mobile AR systems that provide real-time object

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### RIL may buy Urban Ladder, Milkbasket to boost e-tail

Reliance Industries (RIL) is in talks to acquire online furniture brand Urban Ladder and milk delivery platform Milkbasket as it looks to strengthen its e-commerce play, said multiple sources familiar with the matter.

**INORGANIC EXPANSION**  
Since 2017, RIL has spent \$3bn\* in acquisitions, mainly to bolster Jio & Reliance Retail. Some of these are:

- > **Haamleys** (toy retailer)
- > **Saavn** (music streaming app)
- > **Emblibe** (Ed-tech startup)
- > **Fynd** (O2O commerce platform)
- > **Grab** (logistics)
- > **Haptik** (chatbot)
- > **Reverie** (local language services)
- > **NowFloats** (small biz platform)

**And, it wants to strengthen its grip further:**

- Future Retail** | With an estimated \$3bn deal, it wants to be a bigger brick-and-mortar player across categories like groceries, fashion & general merchandise
- Urban Ladder** | It will add an established furniture brand & supply chain with offline stores. Reliance Brands also has tie-up with US-based Pottery Barn
- Milkbasket** | Will help build customer stickiness via JioMart grocery delivery

\*Source: Morgan Stanley (Dec 2018)

Source— *The Economic Times*

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recognition, barcoding and indoor navigation. Wearing one of these devices, warehouse workers can see digital picking lists in their field of vision and determine the best route, thus reducing their travel time.

Apart from logistics, AR is also being used to assist in the maintenance of manufacturing equipment. For instance, **Mitsubishi Electric** has been developing AR-based maintenance-support technology based on a 3D model that enables users to confirm the order of inspection on an AR display and then enter inspection results with their voice. Similarly, elevator manufacturer **Thyssenkrupp** is leveraging **Microsoft's** HoloLens technology as a tool for service technicians to visualize and identify problems with elevators by providing hands-free access to technical and expert information on site.

From optimizing operations in warehouses to employee training, AR technology has diverse potential applications in the entire global supply chain. Though the technology's deployed use cases are currently limited, its use is poised to take off as companies are beginning to see an immediate return on investment for AR-based products.

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## Today's News

### Health ID: Another Aadhaar in the offing for new digital medical care ecosystem

A health identity card Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced for all citizens to launch Digital Health Mission on Saturday is expected to empower care seekers by giving each of them a unique identity number, bringing in transparency and check multiple frauds plaguing the sector, experts involved in the NDA's key project exclusively told ET.

In his address to the nation from Red Fort, Modi said the initiative which is "completely technology based" would revolutionise the health care sector and the ID card each citizen would eventually get will have all the information about his or her medical conditions.

Source – The Economic Times

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### Amazon, Flipkart expect big jump in festive sales; ask sellers to place large orders with brands

India's two biggest ecommerce marketplaces, Amazon and Walmart-owned Flipkart, expect this year's festival-season business in smartphones, television sets, refrigerators, washing machines and apparel to nearly double for some categories and increase at least 40% in others, top industry executives told ET.

The platforms have accordingly asked sellers to place large orders with the respective brands. Five executives aware of the business projections said the two companies expect consumers will increasingly do their festive-season shopping online due to the pandemic, a trend evident in the success of recently concluded promotions earlier this month. Their customer base has also increased 35-40% since the pandemic, likely boosting business prospects.

Source – The Economic Times

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## Vaccine king Adar Poonawalla forays into tech-enabled lending

Vaccine king Adar Poonawalla of Serum Institute has made a major play into technology-based lending even as many corporate houses are scaling down their non-banking finance operations. The \$10-billion cash-rich group has invested Rs 850 crore in Poonawalla Finance and aims to adopt a low-leverage, low-cost delivery model to high-quality individual borrowers. The one-year-old Poonawalla Finance has already disbursed Rs 1,500-crore personal loans in the range of Rs 2 lakh to Rs 30 lakh at rates that compete with banks — with no security, no guarantors and zero prepayment charges being its unique selling proposition.

Source – The Economic Times

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## Google in talks with ShareChat as latter scouts for \$150-200 million

Google is in talks with ShareChat for investing in the Bengaluru-based social media firm, two people familiar with the matter told ET. ShareChat is looking to raise \$150-200 million and is holding discussions with investors and technology companies, as it prepares to battle it out with over a dozen rivals to fill the gap left by banned Chinese apps, including TikTok and Helo. JPMorgan is advising the company in raising funds.

Source – The Economic Times

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## Blended-office version to redefine the workplace

The pandemic has changed a few things irreversibly as the world has realised that people can be reasonably productive working from home. What may emerge going ahead is a blended-office version, especially in technology-enabled sectors, where remote working can help save significant costs while enhancing productivity, according to the four-member panel at the ET Back to Business Dialogues.

There is an immediate transformation. Workspaces have moved home at least for most of India. People are not going to go to work yet unless they have to. Manufacturing has to go to work, but even in manufacturing, people are trying to enforce social distancing. Offices as we know it, right now, are mostly vacant. The norm is pretty simple — if you can manage from home, then please work from home because the risks and the potential downside of opening up are so high that if you take one step forward and then (it's) few steps back. I see a hybrid model emerge.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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## Parliamentary panel on IT to look into Facebook's content takedown concerns

The financial disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic forced many businesses to adopt digital technologies. A recent report by management consulting firm RedSeer consulting now indicates that the growth of digital payments in India may have received a boost due to the pandemic and the resultant country-wide three-month-long lockdown, having possibly brought about a permanent change in consumer behaviour.

The report mentions that as the economy rebounds after the Covid-19 lockdown, there will be a consequent growth in digital payments, which are expected to grow 2x and touch \$60 Tn by 2022.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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## Samsung likely to move part of smartphone production to India

Samsung may shift a major part of its smartphone production to India from Vietnam and other countries with the South Korean electronics major finalising plans to produce devices worth over \$40 billion (Rs 3 lakh crore) in the country, people familiar with the matter said. "Samsung is likely to diversify its production lines for making smartphones to India under the PLI (Production Linked Incentive) scheme and this will have an impact in its existing capabilities across various countries like Vietnam," a person familiar with the matter told ET.

Government officials said Samsung's move would also help plug a major loophole in India's efforts to find ways to eschew cheap imports from Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries to India, owing to the Free Trade Agreement the country has with the trading block. The company runs its largest mobile phone manufacturing unit in the world in Noida, from where it also exports to other markets. The company currently makes roughly 50% of its phones in Vietnam, as per industry estimates. It is in the process of winding down manufacturing in South Korea, where labour costs are high. In addition, it has manufacturing bases in Brazil and Indonesia.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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## Banks issued 1.6 crore new debit cards during peak lockdown

Indian banks issued more than 16 million new debit cards during the peak months of the lockdown amid an increased demand by customers for contactless cards during the pandemic, dovetailing also the banking regulator's directive to replace the old magnetic stripe cards with the new contactless variant.

Bankers and payment experts said this — mostly driven by new issuances by public sector banks — could also be on the back of increased push by the central government to expand the coverage of various relief schemes linked to Jan Dhan bank accounts.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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## Urban India's reverse migration from mobile to desktop

India's urban professionals are reverse migrating to desktops from mobiles during the pandemic, as hundreds of thousands of them relinquish their "always on the move" tag to work from home.

According to Google Trends for India, interest in queries with the term "for desktop" rose sharply starting in March, when the lockdown began, and peaked at 100 — the top interest score — twice in both June and July. This was based on an analysis of the search term over the past 12 months as on August 13.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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