

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Government mulling innovative ways to deal with banks' NPA provision

Paytm eyes Rs 60,000 crore from interbank transactions

Apple may soon launch a credit card with Goldman Sachs: Report

Bitcoin traders move SC, say nothing illegal about crypto cash

Today's View

You Reap What You Sow

In farming, the timing and duration of sowing play a crucial role to ensure a good crop. For centuries, farmers had been using age-old methods to envisage the right sowing date. Generally, they'd choose to sow in early June to take advantage of the monsoon season, which normally lasted from June to August. But the changing weather patterns in the past decade have led to unpredictable monsoons, causing poor crop yields.

This results in significant losses for farmers as a variety of expenditures are incurred for seeds, as well as for the fertilizer applications. As per **Dr. J. S. Bains**, Director, Agriculture, Govt of India, the average per acre loss of yield can touch the mark of 1.5 quintals per week in case of delayed sowing of normal varieties of wheat after November 15.

Here, contemporary technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) are proving to be helpful for farmers in determining the right time and conditions to sow their seeds and methods to reap a healthy crop. It also gives insights on soil health and also recommends the appropriate fertilizers for maximizing the produce.

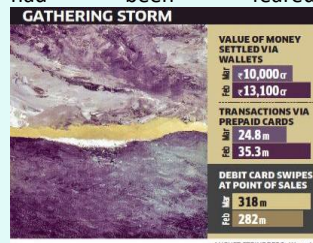
Leveraging Machine Learning and Power BI, **Microsoft** in collaboration with **ICRISAT** has developed an **AI Sowing App** powered by Microsoft Cortana Artificial Intelligence. The app sends sowing advisories to participating farmers on the

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Hard times: RBI's KYC norms burn a hole in mobile wallets

India's mobile wallet industry saw a sharp fall in usage in March as new Reserve Bank of India regulations kicked in, although not as drastically as had been feared



Source – The Economic Times

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Date – 14th May 18

optimal date to sow even on their feature phone. Especially, the farmers don't need to install any sensors in their fields or incur any capital expenditure.

Subsequently, **ICRISAT** and **Microsoft** have launched a pilot program for 175 farmers in the Andhra Pradesh. The program shares sowing advisories, such as the sowing date, land preparation, soil test based fertilizer application to farmers helping them to get a better idea about sowing pattern. Looking at its success, this program has been expanded to more than 3,000 farmers across the states of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, resulting in the increased yield ranging from 10% to 30%.

Though the use of technology in sowing is in its nascent stage, it has a huge potential to mitigate the food crises of growing population. With the emergence of AI technology the famous proverb "You reap what you sow" can become "You reap when you sow (with AI)" if the potential of AI is well explored in farming activities like sowing.

Today's News

Government mulling innovative ways to deal with banks' NPA provision

The finance ministry is examining a proposal to find innovative ways for dealing with burden of NPA provisions by issuing provision shore-up certificates (PSC) to banks. With the help of this instrument, the operating profit of bank is saved from erosion and the lender would be able to focus on lending activities as being in financially good shape.

Under this scheme, the bank concerned will get PSC to the extent of its provision against the bad loans and conserve its capital, officials said, adding that this capital can then be used for expanding core business of lending.

Source – Mint

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Paytm eyes Rs 60,000 crore from interbank transactions

Paytm is targeting average monthly interbank account transactions of Rs 60,000 crore through its platform by the end of the year, to be achieved through a new feature of bank transfers that the digital payments company added to its mobile application.

Paytm, which already offers users the option of transferring funds between their mobile wallets, opened up bank transfers using UPI (Unified Payments Interface) and IMPS (Immediate Payment Service). UPI and IMPS are run by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and facilitate real-time interbank transactions.

Source – The Economic Times

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of Vikas Madaan and Pankaj Tadas

Kochi start-up launches NDC booking for Lufthansa

Kochi-based travel start-up Verteil Technologies has launched "live direct connect booking" for Lufthansa through IATA's NDC specification.

The company had launched NDC in India earlier with British Airways. It offers IATA's NDC (New Distribution Capability) specification via the Verteil Direct Connect platform.

Source – Business Line

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GoM on sops for digital payments under GST to study revenue impact

Sushil Modi led panel on incentivizing digital payments under GST will carry out a detailed analysis of revenue implications on doling out concession in tax rate. It will also study "international best practices" on moving towards a less-cash economy.

Source – The Economic Times

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Aventus in talks to raise \$300 mn fund for consumer start-up investments

Financial services firm Aventus Capital is in talks with potential investors to raise a \$300-million consumer sector-focused fund, two people in the know said.

The fund will be housed under the Zodius platform, which Aventus acquired last year.

Source – Mint

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Apple may soon launch a credit card with Goldman Sachs: Report

Apple has reportedly partnered with investment bank Goldman Sachs and may introduce a new credit card next year. According to a report by Wall Street Journal, the move comes as Apple puts increasing focus on revenue from online services and content, and as Goldman Sachs seeks to make more money from consumer banking operations. A joint credit card bearing the Apple Pay brand could launch early next year, and replace a rewards-card partnership Apple has with Barclays.

Source – DNA

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Bitcoin traders move SC, say nothing illegal about crypto cash

A group of bitcoin traders has filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court against the Reserve Bank of India's order to banks to withdraw services to trade cryptocurrencies, arguing that the regulator was blocking "essential services" as virtual currencies are not banned in the country.

The case has been listed for further hearing on May 17. "Banking is an essential service. How can one deny access to an essential service when I am not doing anything illegal? You have not declared VCs (virtual currencies) illegal in the country," said one of the petitioners requesting anonymity.

Source – The Economic Times

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The negatives of data localisation

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently mandated that payment companies physically store Indian citizens' payment data in India. Companies will have six months to comply. The RBI's aim is to protect the sensitive financial information of Indian citizens.

Local Indian players are hailing the move as it would give them a time advantage while global players re-organise their data storage to comply with regulations. However, it is worthwhile for payment operators to consider the impact on the industry as a whole.

Source – Business Standard

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Electric vehicles market in India set to see several new entrants

The electric vehicles (EV) market in India is set to see the entry of a flurry of new players of foreign origin and home-grown start-ups in the two- and three-wheeler segments, even as the established Indian automobile firms such as Hero MotoCorp, Bajaj Auto and TVS Motor Company have chosen to adopt a calibrated and wait-and-watch approach before they jump onto the EV bandwagon. The government's ambitious National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020 envisages achieving 6-7 million sales of hybrid and electric vehicles by 2020.

Source – Business Standard

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SoftBank in talks to invest big money in Paytm Mall

SoftBank has held early discussions to invest more in Paytm Mall even as it makes up its mind about selling its significant minority stake in rival Flipkart to Walmart, said two people familiar with the development.

Source – The Economic Times

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Virtual cards give major boost to commercial cards sector

According to RBR's Commercial Cards in Europe 2018, there were 58 million commercial cards in Europe in 2016, up 6% on the previous year.

Commercial cards represent just 4% of all cards and with many businesses not yet offering commercial cards, there is much opportunity for expansion.

Source – Global Banking and Finance

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Are you a victim of cyberstalking?

Bajaj Allianz, has launched a cyber-protection product for individuals – Cyber Safe Insurance.

Given that Twitter, Facebook and banks' payment platform continue to raise questions on data security, individuals are under constant pressure to protect their data. Recently, Aadhaar has also joined the data leak scare. Cyber Safe Insurance looks welcoming on the face of it, but there are precautions one must take.

Source – Business Line

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