



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Govt plans online platform for trading in farm, animal waste

Online marketplace for spot selling of sugar launched

Tech Mahindra bets big on 5G, sets up lab with Intel

Nasscom asks IT firms to login on re-skilling platform

Private labels pushing e-commerce firms to profitability

Today's View

e-NAM: Revamped

With nearly 62% of the population depending on the agriculture sector for their livelihood (as per **Agricultural Census of India**), the Government's decision to build the e-platform for farmers to remove inter-state barriers in moving farm produce, has been a game changer. Launched two years back, the **electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)** platform has enabled transactions of agricultural commodities worth over Rs. 36,200 crore as of January 2018 (as per Minister of State for Agriculture).

In order to implement and maintain a technology platform of such scale, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs set up **AgriTech Infrastructure Fund (ATIF)** with an allocation of Rs. 200 crore from 2015-16 to 2017-18. The government has roped in technology companies like **Techno Brain Global FZE** and agricultural companies such as **Nagarjuna Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (NFCL)** to develop, operate and maintain the e-NAM portal for five years.

Recognizing the massive potential of e-NAM platform to engage more farmers and mandis, the platform was recently revamped with a variety of new features. Introducing and customizing features has been made possible with the use of **open-source software** while designing the existing platform.

With over 470 regulated wholesale mandis being integrated with eNAM, there was a need for a centralized platform to analyse and compare the performance of each mandi. Hence, the **MIS dashboard** was introduced to provide greater insight into the performance of each mandi in terms of arrival

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E-way bill may be relaxed for e-comm for small orders

E-commerce players may get exemption from having to generate an e-way bill under the GST if there are multiple deliveries on the same trip.



TAKING THE HIGH ROAD

- The Centre is likely to give e-commerce players relaxation if orders are small
- It is not clear if separate e-way bills for multiple orders are required if the same vehicle carries the consignments
- Besides, the GST Council may offer exemption from the e-way bill to exports from an inland container depot to a port

The e-way bill to be introduced on April 1 for interstate movements of over Rs 50,000, and in a phased manner for intrastate movements.

Source – Business Standard

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Date – 26th Feb 18

and trade. This will help Mandi Board officials and APMC officials to compare the performance of mandis on daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis.

The performance tracking can also be done via **eNAM Mobile App** which provides notifications for minimum bid price and MSP, preferred list of commodities, notifications, live status of lots, progress of pending invoices etc. Even the movement of farmers around mandis has been streamlined through the option of enabling **'Gate Entry'** directly from the app. Additionally, the payments platform has been revamped in order to make it more user friendly. Apart from existing payment options like RTGS/NEFT, debit card and internet banking, Unified Payment Interface (UPI) facility through BHIM has also been introduced.

A grievance redressal management system is also being set up at mandis to flag technology issues related to the portal as well as offer real time tracking for the same. The website has been improved with more informative features like live status of markets of e-NAM based on gate entry, latest information on events, dynamic training calendar, etc.

With these new features, the eNAM portal now has greater potential to overcome existing challenges of the agri-marketing system. However, reforms across various agricultural sectors like soil health, traditional farming, irrigation and fertilizers need to be carried out in order to achieve the final outcome – well-being of farmers.

Today's News

Govt plans online platform for trading in farm, animal waste

PM Modi said the government plans to set up an online platform for trading in cow dung and agricultural waste under its recently announced waste-to-wealth scheme. He said it has the potential to create new jobs linked to waste collection, transportation, biogas sales, etc.

The Prime Minister said India's cattle population numbering 300 million produce 3 million tonnes of dung every day. This together with agricultural waste and kitchen waste could be used for producing biogas.

Source – BusinessLine

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Online marketplace for spot selling of sugar launched

Indian Sugar Exim Corporation (ISEC) and NCDEX eMarket Ltd (NeML) have joined hands to launch an online platform for spot selling of sugar and allied products, called Indian Sugar eMarket (ISeM). This can help in better price discovery for mills and buyers alike, apart from offering transparency in operations and ease in settlement of post trade formalities.

Source – BusinessLine

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of Sadhika A. and Manish Kulkarni

Food delivery sector on cusp of revival

The food delivery sector has seen a revival over the past 6 months. While Zomato and Swiggy have raised large funding rounds, Uber and Ola, attracted by the runaway expansion of Swiggy, are investing hundreds of crores of rupees to gain a slice of the market.

The food-technology sector is expected to touch at least \$2.5 billion by 2021 from its current size of about \$700 million.

Source – Livemint

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Alibaba in talks to pick up stake in Dailyhunt

Alibaba group is in talks to buy a minority stake in Dailyhunt, a news aggregator and e-bookstore.

Alibaba has already proposed a valuation close to \$500 million for Dailyhunt. "The talks are, however, not yet conclusive as Dailyhunt is also looking for other funding options apart from Alibaba," a professional added.

Source – Livemint

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VC firms scramble to sell stakes in old portfolio firms

VC firms are scrambling to sell stakes in old portfolio companies and seeking fund extensions, as they seek to prove that their bets on Indian start-ups will pay off after more than a decade of investing.

Source – Livemint

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Tech Mahindra bets big on 5G, sets up lab with Intel

Tech Mahindra has set up a lab in Bengaluru in association with Intel as part of its preparedness for 5G services expected to be rolled out by 2019. The Department of Telecom (DoT) expects to finalize the road map for the services by June this year.

CP Gurnani, CEO and MD, Tech Mahindra, said the company has already re-skilled about 30,000 of its employees in handling emerging technologies. The remaining 75,000 employees will be re-skilled by the end of this year, he said.

Source – BusinessLine

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Nasscom asks IT firms to login on re-skilling platform

PM Modi launched Nasscom's Future Skills platform, hoping to train 40 lakh IT professionals in eight new skill sets, including AI, ML and big data. NASSCOM has roped in third-party providers of these courses online to roll out the IT-based education service. Companies wanting to re-skill employees will have to pay a fee for accessing the Learning Management Platform.

Powered by AI tools, the system can monitor the progress of the learning. Nasscom will ask its members (and others) to opt for a paid subscription for the courses. For now, NASSCOM will offer this in B2B mode to let companies reskill their 20 lakh employees.

Source – BusinessLine

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Private labels pushing e-commerce firms to profitability

E-commerce firms such as Pepperfry, Myntra, ShopClues, Flipkart and Amazon are directing their focus towards private-label brands to garner higher margins and to fill gaps in customer needs, as revealed by search query algorithms on their platforms. Online shoppers are lapping up these private labels, as evident from its increasing contribution to total sales, ranging from 12% to over 50%, in some cases.

Pepperfry, which has over the last 5 years built a portfolio of 9 private-label brands that contribute to nearly 55% of its overall sales, has forayed into the Rs.6,000cr mattress market in India with the launch of Clouddio, its 10th private label.

Source – BusinessLine

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Unacademy in talks to raise up to \$35 million

Education content platform Unacademy is in talks with existing and new investors to raise \$30-35 mn, less than 6 months after it raised its previous funding round. Unacademy, which counts Sequoia Capital, Nexus Venture Partners and SAIF Partners among its backers, has seen a sharp increase in user traffic, making it an attractive asset for investors scouting for content or education technology start-ups. The company also plans to expand its international footprint.

Source – Livemint

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Big brand partnerships drive seller sign-ups for Paytm Mall

In the next 4 months, Paytm Mall hopes to have all 150,000 of Samsung's authorized retailers in India on its platform. The move will help the e-commerce entity become the single largest seller of mobile telephony devices in the country.

Brands have so far been unable to ignore e-commerce players but at the same time had to face the wrath of their offline channels as online ones engaged in deep discounting.

Source – Business Standard

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Tech, better supervision needed to tackle banking malpractices

A twin strategy of better monitoring and supervision of banks and spreading the best corporate governance standards could help tackle financial frauds such as the one uncovered recently in Punjab National Bank, CII said.

Source – BusinessLine

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Airbnb upgrades products with luxury options, user reward

Airbnb is planning a major overhaul of its business strategy. The company has launched new categories – vacation homes and boutiques. It has also launched luxury products. The company will soon also be launching special stay options.

Source – BusinessLine

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