



## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

**IIT-Kharagpur develops prototype using batteryless sensor nodes to monitor soil health**

**Cryptocurrencies In India: A Battle With Government Diktats, RBI Warnings**

**India's most profitable store bets on youth in villages, small towns with online push**

**RBS sees 'big' opportunities in Indian fintech space**

## Today's View

### Fintech in Real Estate

Fintechs are building innovative solutions to do financial transactions, loans and banking procedures that are radically changing the financial services and in this process, also disrupting the real estate industry. They are cutting out the middlemen from the real estate transactions and making borrowing and lending both faster processes with fewer delays and lower costs.

According to a report by **Deloitte**, globally, real estate fintech start-ups increased by 18% from 246 in 2008 to 1,372 by 2017. In the same period, cumulative investments soared from \$2.2 billion to \$31.3 billion. These fintechs have been working in a variety of areas in real estate- from operations like property search, leasing, facility management etc. to solutions such as real estate transaction services, digital lending platforms for construction and real estate owners and lenders and online real estate investments options.

Although online real estate marketplaces such as **Housing.com**, **MagicBricks.com** etc. have been around for a while, real estate in India continues to see most of its success as an offline business, with very little technological innovation happening to speed up its adoption as a viable online business model. In the US, companies like **Ten-X** have revolutionized real estate allowing buyers, sellers, and real estate professionals to search, list and transact properties completely online.

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### Indians may have gone back to cash & credit pay

Indians have likely reverted to their old habit of paying by cash for small purchases with currency circulation improving to near pre-demonetization levels, indicates an analysis of credit and debit card usage in the previous financial year.



Source – The Economic Times

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Date – 12<sup>th</sup> June 18

Moving away from online marketplaces, there are other emerging fintech models in real estate like Israel's **Obligo Inc** are developing a new financial standard to replace the security deposit - the large sum of money required when renting an apartment. Under this new standard, tenants would provide landlords with a limited billing authorization instead of a cash deposit, allowing landlords to bill them for any damages incurred at the end of tenancy. This billing authorization relies heavily on Open Banking, and is backed by a unique credit-based capital structure. Obligo's solution has been developed in collaboration with Silicon Valley Bank's New York City FinTech team. In the event of a claim at the end of a tenancy, Obligo pays landlords right away while enabling tenants to repay the claim in instalments.

And yet again, big data and analytics tools on the tech side are changing the way trends are analysed and decisions are made with respect to real estate. For example, understanding trends in buying behaviour, including relevant comparable has become much easier with tools from companies like **Zillow** and **Redfin** on the residential side and **Loopnet** on the commercial side.

It's great to see that, like many other sectors, real estate is constantly pushing to incorporate or develop technologies to improve the business and customer experience by reducing cost, friction and time, as well as improve transparency and security.

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## Today's News

### IIT-Kharagpur develops prototype using battery less sensor nodes to monitor soil health

Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology in Kharagpur (IIT-Kgp) have developed a smart solution for farmers based on Internet of Things (IoT) to help monitor soil moisture, soil temperature, nutrient contents and water levels.

Researchers from its department of computer science and engineering have developed a prototype using battery less sensor nodes to monitor agricultural field parameters. This solution can also be used in other areas like construction, traffic management and health-care systems.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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### Cryptocurrencies In India: A Battle With Government Diktats, RBI Warnings

As less than a month is left before the RBI's (Reserve Bank of India) three-month deadline given to banks for snapping their ties with cryptocurrency firms expires, the cryptocurrency traders and exchanges are in utter trepidation and disbelief. Some, however, are somewhat hopeful that after a RBI clampdown comes into force, the legal status (or the lack of it) will be somewhat clear.

Source – *NDTV*

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of **Vikas Madaan** and **Aparna Anand**

### RBS sees 'big' opportunities in Indian fintech space

In 2016, Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) decided to wind up its retail and corporate banking in India. However, India continues to play an important role in delivering vital functions to help support RBS' customers in the UK through technology, global finance services, risk, operations and some shared services.

Source – *BusinessLine*

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### CredAble raises Rs 100 crore from Alpha Capital

Supply chain financing firm CredAble has raised Rs 100 crore in Series A funding from private equity firm Alpha Capital. Set up in 2017, CredAble provides supply chain financing to vendors of large corporates. Nirav Choksi, founder, CredAble told ET that the funds raised would be deployed towards scaling up operations and technology, as well as onward lending. It aims to expand its loan book to Rs 500 crore by FY19.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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### Ace Turtle launches new AI product for global brands

Ace Turtle has launched an artificial intelligence platform for the global brands its works with to offer analytics and insights on order allocation to different offline points as well as optimally managing the safety stock. The product, called Albus, is built on Microsoft Azure and is currently live with three brands – Arrow, Flying Machine and US Polo.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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## Paytm is looking to cash in with a PoS business plan

Digital payments major Paytm is all set to enter the physical point-of-sales terminal business and is planning to roll out PoS machines at merchant outlets across the country, according to two people in the know of the matter. The payments player, which was using QR codes to ramp up offline digital payments, is now opening card payments at merchant locations as well.

“The idea is to offer users all forms of digital payments. What Paytm is doing through UPI encouraging bank-to-bank transfers, this is something similar where they are entering into all forms of digital payments through PoS,” said the person quoted above who is privy to the developments.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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## India's first lithium ion cell factory to come up in Andhra Pradesh

Munoth Industries Limited will set up India's first lithium ion cell production project by investing Rs 799 crore in three phases in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, a move which will provide a trigger for enabling mobile component manufacturing in India that will also lead to value addition in overall mobile phone manufacturing. In the first phase, Rs 165 crore will be invested to produce li ion cells having total storage capacity of 200,000 Ah (Ampere hour) per day, which will be available for assembly for mobile phone manufacturers from April 2019.

“As a core component shall be manufactured in India, the natural corollary of this will be that there will be an increase in the value addition of the battery pack and eventually the mobile handset. An ecosystem of SME start-ups around Lithium ion products will also be planned,” the Indian Cellular Association said while announcing the plans of the company.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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## India's most profitable store bets on youth in villages, small towns with online push

V-MART Retail, India's most-profitable department store chain, is planning to sell apparel and other goods online in a bid to attract youth in villages and small towns.

The retail store, which runs medium-sized stores that sell clothes, accessories, footwear and everyday staples, is also planning to add 30 to 40 stores every year to its current 177 stores, Samir Misra, the Harvard University-educated chief operating officer of the retailer, said in an interview. About 80 per cent of V-Mart's stores are located in cities with a population below one million. "We are in the process of an omnichannel strategy," Mr Misra said, referring to integrating both online and physical shops.

Source – *The Business Times*

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## OYO forms strategic partnership with Motherland

Hotel aggregator OYO on Monday announced its strategic partnership with Motherland Joint Ventures, the group that has helped build India's best-loved global brands, including Incredible India, Royal Enfield, Make in India and IndiGo.

Source – *Business Standard*

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## Microsoft Working on New Cloud Gaming Service and Xbox Consoles

Microsoft has said it is working on a new Cloud gaming service as it showcased its commitment to invest in gaming and announced studio acquisitions, tons of new games and new Xbox consoles. The announcement was made by Microsoft ahead of the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) 2018, the world's leading video game show, that is scheduled to held at the Los Angeles Convention Centre from June 12-14.

Source – *News18*

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## IIIT-H's innovation centre to focus on deep-tech start-ups

As it evolved into country's biggest academic start-up incubator in the last 10 years, the Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) at the International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT-Hyderabad) is planning to focus on deep-tech start-ups and on “productising research”.

Source – *BusinessLine*

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