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Today's View

Geoengineering – Counteracting climate change

For the optimists, the Corona virus pandemic seems to be a silver lining for climate change correction. However, it also underlines the magnitude of the task ahead of us. Making much of humanity stay at home, a significant curtailing of economic output and an almost complete cessation of aviation with an 80% reduction in car use, has only resulted in a slight drop in emissions by about 8% of the estimated total for the year, as per estimates by the **International Energy Agency.**

A Bloomberg report on how Coronavirus impacts Climate change, talks about the inertia in the climate system because of which even if we were to significantly reduce or stop our emissions today, one would still see an increase in temperatures expected for the next 20 years almost unaffected. It is very likely that the total concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere will continue going up in future.

To tackle this emergency, scientists are exploring climate geoengineering, a blanket term for any deliberate large-scale manipulation of natural systems to battle climate change. The different kinds of technologies under this umbrella includes afforestation and enhanced weathering, which leverage natural barriers on the greenhouse effect to absorb emissions and approaches such as biochar and carbon capture, which pull carbon out of the air and store it back in the ground.
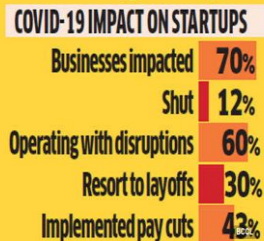
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17% startups have shut shop, shows Ficci survey

Covid-19 has had an impact on 70% of Indian startups, according to a survey, with 17% of them saying they had shuttered their business.

Adding it up
COVID-19 IMPACT ON STARTUPS

Businesses impacted	70%
Shut	12%
Operating with disruptions	60%
Resort to layoffs	30%
Implemented pay cuts	43%

Survey: 'Impact of Covid-19 on Indian Startups'

Source– The Economic Times

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7th July 2020

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा
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Some of the new enterprises doing good work includes 'Carbon Engineering', that "pulls carbon dioxide out of the air by running it through specially formulated chemicals and 'Charm Chemicals' that burns plant biomass to create hydrogen, capturing the greenhouse gases that are produced in the process.

Another start-up, Ocean-Based Climate Solutions has "created a device that stirs up water in the ocean to promote the growth of phytoplankton, which is algae that can take carbon dioxide out of the air and deliver it to the bottom of the sea in solid form".

Some Y Combinator funded projects include Prometheus, which uses emission-free solar and wind power to turn sequestered carbon dioxide into fuel and Saratoga Energy, which turns carbon dioxide in the atmosphere into carbon nanotubes for use in electric vehicles and energy grids.

With such major developments, the low carbon industries are predicted to reach a market size of more than $2T by 2030, according to CB Insights' Industry Analyst Consensus. More about Geoengineering in our next write - up.

Today's News

Digital payment transactions in India rise 23% between Jun 3-Jul 2: Report

Digital payment transaction saw a 23% jump in the past one month, signalling a rebound after the decline seen during the nationwide lockdown, according to a report by fintech platform Razorpay. The report analysed consumer behaviour and digital spending patterns during lockdown and in the later days.

"With the economy inching towards normalcy, digital payment transactions have rebounded by 23% in the last 30 days (June 3-July 2). The overall digital transactions declined by 12% in the last 101 days, compared to a 30% drop in the first 30 days of lockdown (March 24-April 23)," the report said.

Source – LIveMint READ MORE

SBI readies Rs 1,000 crore B2B e-market only for MSMEs

State Bank of India (SBI) is set to invest $100-150 million (Rs 750-1,000 crore) and leverage its YONO platform to set up a business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce marketplace for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The country's largest lender hopes this will also help it better manage financing of small businesses.

The plan, which has been cleared by the bank's executive committee, entails getting MSMEs on to the platform and providing funds based on the transactions that take place. The bank is hoping that it will not only help assess risk better but will also give it greater grip over receivables. "We are engaging with the MSME ministry to create a marketplace for SBI customers to sell their products, called Bharat Craft, which is going to be an e-commerce and technology driven platform. It is in the initial stage of taking shape," said SBI MD Challa Sreenivasulu Setty.

Source – The Economic Times READ MORE

This woman entrepreneur's fintech startup provides college students with interest-free loans

Henna Jain Tatia, 26, and her brother Jaijash Tatia, 27, both studied in the UK. During their time there, they managed their financials through an interest-free overdraft from a UK bank, which allowed them to have small but sufficient credit month-to-month. Studying abroad, this allowed them to have better financial flexibility.

After returning to India, they realised that students in India did not have such financial services. Hence, they started StuCred, a one-stop application for college students' financial needs.

Source – Your Story

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Ola Partners With PhonePe to Promote Digital Payments Amid Coronavirus Pandemic

Ola users will be able to pay for rides with PhonePe soon. Ola on Tuesday announced a strategic partnership with digital payments platform, PhonePe. Through this development, Ola users will be able to link their existing PhonePe account with their Ola account in order to make payments for future rides.

The Bengaluru-based Ola noted in an official blog post that the partnership will "complement" the company's recent safety initiative, Ride Safe India that encourages customers to opt for digital payment channels to "ensure a zero-contact mobility experience," amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Source – NDTV

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Uber, Postmates Agree on $2.65 Billion All-Stock Deal

Uber Technologies Inc. has agreed to acquire Postmates Inc. in a $2.65 billion all-stock takeover expected to be announced as soon as Monday morning in the U.S., according to people familiar with the matter. Uber Eats head Pierre-Dimitri Gore-Coty is expected to continue to run Uber's combined delivery business, according to a person who asked not to be identified discussing a private deal. Under their agreement, Postmates Chief Executive Officer Bastian Lehmann and his team will stay on to manage Postmates as a separate service, another person said.

The takeover would help Uber gain ground against privately-held DoorDash Inc., the current market leader in U.S. food delivery. While Postmates hasn't kept pace with DoorDash, it maintains a strong position in Los Angeles and the American Southwest, both of which could be valuable to Uber Eats. Representatives for Uber and Postmates declined to comment.

Source – Bloomberg

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SBM Bank India, Mastercard to facilitate cross border transactions, remittances

Government of Mauritius-promoted SBM Bank India and global payments technology major Mastercard have joined hands to facilitate cross-border payments and remittances services, a statement said on Monday. The SBM Bank India customers will be able to make real-time domestic business-to-consumer transfers quickly and efficiently using 'Mastercard Send', the statement said.

Remittances and payments businesses have become the cornerstone of SBM Bank India's growth strategy. As banking evolves to become more personal, platform-agnostic and always-on - the Bank has been leading the collaboration narrative to access the best-in-class solutions with its switching partner, YAP, the statement said. Neeraj Sinha, Head-Retail & Consumer Banking, SBM Bank (India), said, "Mastercard Send is a secured and innovative solution - crafted to modernize domestic and cross-border payments and remittances."

Source – The Economic Times

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Meet MoneyCalc, the first broker-tech platform that wants to digitise India's three million independent brokers

Middle India, or our so called Tier II and Tier III cities — from Jammu to Ahmedabad and everything between them — are fast emerging as alternatives to the saturated markets of India's traditional metros. Yet, another important "middle" category of India — the middle-income bracket — is projected to rise to 475 million in 2030, according to a report by Ernst & Young. As rising technological adoption fuels the growing aspirations of middle India, innovations in the financial services landscape are powering both digital and financial inclusion through their innovative solutions, with great potential to scale.

MoneyCalc is one such solution in the digital wealth management space. It's a first-of-its-kind broker-tech platform that aims to digitise India's independent brokers. MoneyCalc makes the average neighborhood financial advisor more efficient by providing an integrated tech stack that covers Digital KYC, online investing, planning, CRM, educational content etc.

Source – Your Story

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Why enabling digital payments is key to SMBs' survival during COVID-19

Even as India overtakes Russia to become the third-worst COVID-19 infected country in the world, our economy is slowly opening up to mitigate further economic damage of the extended lockdown. The SMB sector, which was the worst-hit during the lockdown, is slowly picking up.

During the ongoing crisis, stakeholders in the SMB ecosystem have learned the importance of digitising small businesses and enabling digital, contactless payments. Consumer behaviour is shifting online and customers are increasingly relying on digital platforms for groceries, education, and other essentials.

Source – Your Story

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Agritech sector could attract over $500 million in venture capital investment: Report

Investments from venture capital firms in agri-tech startups are expected to exceed $500 million (around Rs 3,730 crore) in the next two years as entities engaged in helping farmers, enabling financing for them and enhancing farm mechanisation attract significant interest, a report by Maple Capital Advisors said on Monday.

India's agritech sector attracted about $245 million in investments from venture capital firms in 2019, the report titled 'India Agritech – Investment Trends' said.

Source – Money Control

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