



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Centre of Excellence for FinTech in Chennai soon

Amazon food biz to log off if new rules remain on menu

Spotify preps India launch with T-series content deal

India's electric vehicle goals being realised on two wheels, not four

Today's View

A spoonful of DNA and a pinch of AI

Taking the discussion forward from our last write-up (read [here](#)), there has been a rapid growth in personalised nutrition testing and services. Hyper personalisation is an emerging trend in the food industry that is tapping into the health conscious market.

According to the 2016 *Nielsen Global Health and Ingredient Sentiment Survey*, 70 per cent of 30,000 respondents from across 63 countries said they actively make dietary choices to help prevent health conditions, such as obesity, diabetes and high cholesterol.

The meal kit market is one of the fastest growing food market, which is led by the likes of **HelloFresh** and **Gousto**, with many new players entering the market. An interesting example in this domain is **Allplants** which is based on the premise that switching to a plant-based diet is the most impactful way to reduce our environmental footprint. The company has developed a delivery service that wants to make it “effortlessly easy to eat more plants”, it delivers healthy, chef-made, vegan meals, for you to reheat at home.

Pivoting toward consumers who are seeking to improve their health and longevity, established companies such as **Nestle** have joined the trend for personalised nutrition with a blend of artificial intelligence and DNA testing. The program has begun in ageing Japan, which could provide the Swiss company with a wealth of data about customers’ wellness.

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With Central push, FASTag sales treble in one year

Sales of FASTag — the RFID chip stickers that allow vehicles to zoom through toll booths on national highways — have more than trebled in 2018, with 37.37 lakh tags sold by December. However, they still account for just a fourth of the tolls collected.

FASTag sales: Quick rise

	Tags sold (in lakhs)	No of banks issuing tags	No of toll plazas accepting tags	Share of tolls collected (in %)
Dec 2016	1	4	351	6
April 2017	4.5	6	356	12
June 2017	5	6	359	13
Oct 2017	7	6	382	17
Jan 2018	11	12	397	18
Aug 2018	28.1	21	420	22
Dec 2018	37.4	22	457	25

Source – *Hindu BusinessLine*

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One of the early adopters among the food companies was **Campbell Soup Co.**, which invested a startup called **Habit** that uses DNA and blood profiles to make diet recommendations, as well as offering nutritional coaching and tailored meal-kits.

Then there is **GenoPalate** that analyses important variants in an individual's genes which provides insight into how their body metabolizes and absorbs different nutrients. Matching the genetic results with the nutritional composition of foods provides customers with a list of those foods that have the highest amount of nutrients that would benefit the most. This knowledge will empower the customer to eat according to their genetic makeup.

Also, companies like **DNAFit** and **Nutrigenomix** are helping individuals to eat according to their genetic makeup. **Profile Precise** provides a genetic test, diet plans and a dedicated coach to its clients to help clients make the best use of their results.

Doctors in the UK have cited personalised DNA based dietary guidelines as an example of predictive analytics that enables individuals to absorb the knowledge and use it for their own wellness. We agree.

Today's News

Centre of Excellence for FinTech in Chennai soon

Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) plans to set up a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for FinTech at Software Technology Parks of India STPI-Chennai, in association with the Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu.

The objective of the CoE is to enable start-ups to build technologies and solutions that will help financial institutions and start-ups find alternative mechanism for knowing their customers based on existing Know Your Customer (KYC) documents, according to a Tamil Nadu government Order.

Source – *Hindu BusinessLine*

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Amazon food biz to log off if new rules remain on menu

Amazon's food-only retail business will stop selling on Amazon.in if the government's latest foreign direct investment (FDI) guidelines remain unchanged by next month.

This would be a blow for the initiative as Amazon was the only foreign retailer to have committed investment — to the tune of \$500 million — in the food retail segment after it opened up in mid-2016. This development follows the latest notification on e-commerce FDI, which prohibits marketplaces from selling affiliates' products. It goes into effect on February 1.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of **Aparna Anand** and **Manish Kulkarni**

Paisabazaar hits \$1 bn annualised loan disbursal rate

Paisabazaar.com, an online marketplace for financial products, on Monday said that it has reached a milestone of registering an annualised loan disbursal rate of \$ 1 billion. Unsecured loans, which includes personal loans and business loans, form the majority share of the disbursals taking place through the Paisabazaar platform.

Source – *Hindu BusinessLine*

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Spotify preps India launch with T-series content deal

World's largest music streaming service is gearing up for India launch in the next one month as it signed a global content deal with India's major music label T-series. The deal will see Spotify's worldwide audience gain access to T-Series' entire Indian song catalogue including Bollywood and regional movie soundtracks, as well as a wealth of non-film albums and emerging artist content.

Source – *Hindu BusinessLine*

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Sarvatra Technologies seeks funding for microATM network

Sarvatra Technologies, which provides technology services to rural banks, is aiming to expand nationally with its micro ATM network and is in talks to raise \$20 million (Rs 142 crore) to fund the expansion.

Source – *The Economic Times*

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India's electric vehicle goals being realised on two wheels, not four

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has set a target of electric vehicles making up 30 percent of new sales of cars and two-wheelers by 2030 from less than 1% today. But its efforts to convince carmakers to produce electric vehicles have flopped mainly because of no clear policy to incentivise local manufacturing and sales, lack of public charging infrastructure and a high cost of batteries.

India is the world's biggest market for scooters and motorcycles with annual domestic sales exceeding 19 million in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2018 - six times that of car sales over the same period.

Source – Hindustan Times

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We will focus on tech to improve customer experience: CEO, Reliance Health Insurance

Noting that the opportunity in health insurance is massive at an estimated Rs 38,000 crore, which is projected to touch Rs 1-lakh crore by 2021, Ravi Vishwanath, Executive Director and CEO, Reliance Health Insurance, said that the new standalone health insurer is focussed on creating a better customer experience. He said that with healthcare costs rising, health insurance is no longer a 'push product' but a 'pull product'.

The old method of funding for healthcare through savings, and out of pocket, is becoming less attractive, and more people are realising that it makes sense to use a small amount of money to buy protection or insurance.

Source – Hindu BusinessLine

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Bharti Airtel in talks to acquire Telkom Kenya

Bharti Airtel is in talks to buy Telkom Kenya, which will help the Sunil Mittal-led telco emerge stronger in the east African market and improve overall valuation of Airtel Africa in the run-up to its initial public offer (IPO), likely in May-June, people aware of the development said.

Telkom Kenya is the third-largest telco in Kenya with over 5 million users, behind market leader Safaricom with over 30 million and Airtel Kenya, with 10 million-plus customers. It is 60% owned by UK private equity firm Helios Investment Partners and the rest by Kenya's government. Bharti Airtel is learnt to be in preliminary talks with Helios, though it will probably inform the Kenyan telecom regulator only if discussions lead towards a potential deal, said one of the persons cited above.

Source – The Economic Times

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Sachin Bansal invests Rs 650 cr in Ola

Sachin Bansal, founder of Flipkart, has invested Rs 650 crore in cab hailing app Ola. This investment, which is a part of the ongoing Series J round, comes in at the same share price as the previous investment by Steadview Capital, at a valuation of around \$6 billion. Bansal has made seed investments in nine start-ups so far, including Ather Energy, SigTuple, SpoonJoy, Unacademy, Plabro Networks, among others.

Source – Hindu BusinessLine

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EbixCash acquires four Indian cos

In a spate of acquisitions, Nasdaq-listed Ebix has acquired four Indian companies, a move that will position it as the largest financial exchange in India and strengthen its travel division. It acquired two financial firms, Essel Forex and Weizmann Forex, for a total of about \$57 million and two travel brands for an undisclosed sum.

Source – Hindu BusinessLine

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OYO aims at 1 mn rooms to become world's 'largest' hotel chain

Hospitality firm OYO Hotels and Rooms on Monday said it is working on a roadmap for 1-million room inventory from the existing count of 4.6 lakh. At present, OYO has over 13,000 franchised and leased hotels, and over 450,000 rooms, adding over 64,000 rooms every month, globally.

Source – MoneyControl

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