

of **Australia (CBA)**. The technology infrastructure for this unique bond offering is being hosted on the Microsoft Azure cloud computing platform.

Multiple financial institutions are also working on similar offerings. For instance, **UBS** has been experimenting with '**Smart Bond**', an automated bond contract which uses the capabilities of blockchain databases to operate as cryptographically-secure, yet open and transparent general ledgers.

On the other hand, **Solidus Bond** has been invented as the blockchain-based peer-to-peer digital bearer bond to perform the functions of coupon payments and bond redemption typically carried out by a financial institution. It utilizes SHA-256 elliptical encryption on a decentralized blockchain to create and redeem debt instruments issued in a digital currency. Coupon payments and bond redemption are also executed by the algorithm, eliminating the need for brokerages and theoretically reducing bond duration to zero.

Considering the potential opportunities offered by emerging technologies like Blockchain in bond markets, concerted efforts from various stakeholders like financial institutions, technology firms and even regulators will go a long way in further developing more matured tech-enabled bond market-based offerings.

Today's News

Google, Paytm Mall may team up to shop for Future Retail stake

Google is looking to join forces with Alibaba-backed Paytm Mall to form a consortium and invest Rs 3,500-4,000 crore for a 7-10% stake in Future Retail Ltd (FRL), the flagship listed company of Kishore Biyani, said several people with knowledge of the matter. This consortium will be pitted against Amazon, the world's largest online retailer, which submitted a term sheet to pick up a similar stake in FRL recently. On February 5 that Future Group was exploring an alliance with both Amazon and Alibaba, with Biyani having met Jeff Bezos in the US and Alibaba officials in China.

Source – The Economic Times

[READ MORE](#)

WhatsApp says messages on Google Drive not encrypted

WhatsApp has notified its users that the end-to-end encryption it offers for messages and media on its app, will not remain so if the data is stored as a backup on Google's servers. "Media and messages you back up aren't protected by WhatsApp end-to-end encryption while in Google Drive," WhatsApp said in an update on its site. The explicit mention comes even as the Facebook-owned company said on August 16 that it has signed a pact with Google to allow users to store messages on the internet company's cloud storage offering -drive, without any quota from November 12. Till now, a WhatsApp user's data could be stored on Google drive but this was counted within the 15 GB free space that a Google account offered.

Source – The Economic Times

[READ MORE](#)

This News Letter has been prepared with the assistance of G Balakrishna and Manish Kulkarni

Zerodha offers its mutual funds product Coin at zero cost

Bengaluru-based digital investment platform Zerodha has started offering its mutual funds product Coin absolutely free of cost, in a bid to strengthen its game as Paytm, the largest digital payments company, is all set to start offering its own mutual funds product.

Source – The Economic Times

[READ MORE](#)

ZestMoney raises \$13.4 million in a round led by Xiaomi

Bengaluru-based digital lending platform ZestMoney has raised \$13.4 million in a round led by Chinese smartphone manufacturer Xiaomi in an extension of its Series-A round. It also saw the participation of their existing investors PayU, Ribbit Capital and Omidyar Network. ZestMoney will strengthen its technology and data science capabilities as well as expand use cases for the core ZestMoney Affordability Product.

Source – The Economic Times

[READ MORE](#)

Amazon plans to invest \$700 million in Kishore Biyani's Future Group

The Indian unit of Jeff Bezos-led Amazon has begun formal negotiations with Kishore Biyani's Future Group to invest around \$600-700 million for a 12 to 15 per cent stake in the retail major, it is learnt. The two entities have signed a term sheet to take the talks further, sources said.

Source – Business Standard

[READ MORE](#)

Online players seek offline presence to expand business

Over a dozen brands that started off as pure-play e-commerce businesses have an offline presence now, opening brick-and-mortar outlets in a bid to chase profitability and build trust among consumers.

Online players such as Clovia, Craftsvilla, PrettySecrets, Zivame, UrbanLadder, Nykaa, Myntra, Caratlane, Lenskart, Pepperfry, Creyate and Teabox have chalked out a strategy to focus on the offline channel by opening standalone stores or shop-in-shops (small touch-points at multi-brand retail shops). The strategy, the players feel, is paying off as the sales have improved significantly in the physical stores vis-a-vis online e-commerce websites.

Source – BusinessLine

[READ MORE](#)

CPUs vs GPUs: Which chips will give firms the AI edge?

Early this month at the Intel AI Devcon 2018 in Bengaluru, a holographic avatar called Ella listened intently to composer Kevin Doucette playing notes on his synthesizer. When he paused, she began composing her own notes, complementing his music in real-time.

How did this happen? Ella was learning about features such as tempo, scale and pitch from the music data that was being sent in real-time to an Intel Movidius Neural Compute Stick. Intel used a class of artificial neural networks, the recurrent neural network or RNN that depends on previous calculations to work on current ones, to perform this artificial intelligence (AI) task.

Source – Mint

[READ MORE](#)

Why Instagram has become the next Facebook

India's urban youth spends more time on social media compared with their older counterparts, with Instagram emerging as the favorite among the youngest lot, shows a recent survey conducted by market research firm YouGov in collaboration with Mint.

While Facebook remains the most popular social media platform among the millennials, Instagram beats Facebook among Generation Z. This is in line with the trend witnessed in the US, where teenagers now use Instagram more than Facebook, according to Pew survey data.

Source – Mint

[READ MORE](#)

Warren Buffett set to pick up stake in Paytm

Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc. is set to buy a small stake in One97 Communications Ltd, the parent of Paytm, making it the billionaire investor's first investment in an Indian company, according to two people aware of the development.

Paytm, India's largest payment services provider, has been in talks with Berkshire Hathaway since early February to raise about Rs. 2,200- 2,500 crore at a valuation of about \$10-12 billion, the two people cited above said on condition of anonymity.

Source – Mint

[READ MORE](#)

Mobile transactions boost rise in online furniture sales

In what seems to suggest a shift in online users' channel preference for big ticket items like home furnishing and furniture, online-to-offline platforms are increasingly seeing a significant rise in transaction volumes through their mobile channels including the mobile site and app.

Source – The Economic Times

[READ MORE](#)

Budget hospitality start-up OYO is replicating its India strategy in China

India's budget hospitality startup hit upon a novel way to push the brand in China. After stepping into the market in November last year, OYO used the platform of China's ride-hailing giant Didi to announce its arrival and stay top of mind.

Source – Business Standard

[READ MORE](#)

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this newsletter are personal views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Bank of Baroda. Nothing contained in this publication shall constitute or be deemed to constitute an offer to sell/ purchase or as an invitation or solicitation to do so for any securities of any entity. Bank of Baroda and/ or its Affiliates and its subsidiaries make no representation as to the accuracy; completeness or reliability of any information contained herein or otherwise provided and hereby disclaim any liability with regard to the same. Bank of Baroda Group or its officers, employees, personnel, directors may be associated in a commercial or personal capacity or may have a commercial interest including as proprietary traders in or with the securities and/ or companies or issues or matters as contained in this publication and such commercial capacity or interest whether or not differing with or conflicting with this publication, shall not make or render Bank of Baroda Group liable in any manner whatsoever & Bank of Baroda Group or any of its officers, employees, personnel, directors shall not be liable for any loss, damage, liability whatsoever for any direct or indirect loss arising from the use or access of any information that may be displayed in this publication from time to time.