

STARTUP UPDATES (20.09.20 – 24.09.20)

Saurabh Saxena, co-founder of online tutoring platform Vedantu and Lakshya, is on to his third entrepreneurial venture with Uable, a life skill development online platform for kids.

Uable focuses on the 6-12 year-old category and aims to nurture creative intelligence and develop future-ready skills among them through playful learning methods. It will be formally launched next week and has been in beta mode since February, and saw rapid adoption due to the pandemic-led lockdown.

Most edtech startups primarily focus on school curriculum for students and online entrance exam preparation for college students. Uable, however, looks to complement the school curriculum.

India's edtech sector has outperformed most other startups this year, after educational institutions and classroom learning were hit following the pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns. These companies have been benefiting from the readiness of Indian middle-class families to spend a chunk of their income on education and tutoring to give their children an edge. Uable also is cashing in on the same opportunity.

Uable's interdisciplinary programs combine experiential, play and peer-based learning and span across domains such as science and engineering, technology, arts, humanities and entrepreneurship. Saxena said his aim is to make Uable a one-stop platform for beyond-curriculum learning for children and bridge the skill gap even before a child finishes from school.

Online education startup Byju's on Tuesday said BlackRock, Sands Capital and Alkeon Capital have joined as new investors, as part of the ongoing \$500-million fundraising round.

Earlier this month, Byju's raised funds from a group of investors, including private equity firm Silver Lake Partners along with existing investors General Atlantic, Owl Ventures and Tiger Global at a valuation of \$10.8 billion.

City-based online gaming startup Mobile Premier League (MPL) has raised a series C funding of \$90 million from SIG, RTP Global, and MDI Ventures. This takes overall investments into MPL to \$130.5 million. Existing investors Sequoia India, Go-Ventures, and Base Partners also participated in the round. MPL had earlier raised \$35.5 million in series A investment from Sequoia India, Times Internet, and GoVentures in April 2019. The \$90 million raised by MPL is the second largest investment into a gaming startup this year after \$225 million funding raised by Dream Sports, known for fantasy gaming platform, early this month from Tiger Global Management, TPG Tech Adjacencies, ChrysCapital and Footpath Ventures. The startup is present in India and Indonesia, with offices in Bengaluru, Jakarta, and Pune. It employs over 300 people as of now.

Indian telecom giant Bharti Airtel, on Wednesday (September 23), announced that it has picked up a strategic stake in Thiruvananthapuram-based cloud telephony startup Waybeo in order to scale up its cloud offerings.

With this, Waybeo has become the fifth startup to be inducted into the Airtel Startup Accelerator programme. The telecom giant has previously invested in edtech startup Lattu Kids, fitness-focused startup Spectacom, conversation AI-startup Voicezen and jobs marketplace Vahan.ai.

Google India, on Tuesday (September 22), released the list of startups for the fourth batch of Google for Startups Accelerator India programme. This year, the tech giant shortlisted 20 Indian startups after screening 600 applicants that will receive three months mentorship and support from its network of internal and external mentors. In a blog, Google said that the current batch comprises startups across key areas such as education, retail, mental health and wellness, healthtech, fintech and agritech and more.

The 20 Indian startups selected to be a part of the programme include Antwak, BharatAri, BlackLight Games, Decoder, Factors.ai, Foxy.in, Gram Powder, InnerHour, Leher, Lokal, Math Buddy, Mera Cashier, Mosaic Wellness, myHQ, Navia Life Care, Orowealth, Virohan, Wellthy Therapeutics, Womaniya, and Zeo Auto.

1. **Antwak** Sector: Edtech
2. **BharatAgri** Sector: Agritech
3. **BlackLight Games** Sector: Gaming
4. **Dcoder** Sector: Deeptech
5. **Factors.ai** Sector: Deeptech
6. **Foxy.in** Sector: Ecommerce
7. **Gram Power** Sector: Energy
8. **InnerHour** Sector: Health
9. **Leher** Sector: Social media
10. **Lokal** Sector: Hyperlocal news platform
11. **Math Buddy** Sector: Edtech
12. **Mera Cashier** Sector: Fintech
13. **Mosaic Wellness** Sector: Wellness
14. **myHQ** Sector: Workspace rental
15. **Navia Life Care** Sector: Healthcare
16. **Orowealth** Sector: Fintech
17. **Virohan** Sector: Edutech
18. **Wellthy Therapeutics** Sector: Healthtech
19. **Womaniya** Sector: Healthtech
20. **ZeoAuto** Sector: Mobility