LAWYERS HUB
Tech for Justice

Newsletter

START UPS

India set to introduce 30% Crypto Tax and Digital Currency

Mozilla Common Voice dataset grows by 30% adding 8 New languages

Lami acquires Kenya's Bluewave Insurance Agency to expand access to insurance across Africa

■ Lami, Kenya's insurance technology company, has acquired Bluewave Insurance Agency, a Kenyan-based insurtech startup that leverages mobile technology to reach the underserved population tapping into Africa's insurance gap. With this acquisition, Lami aims to continue its mission towards democratizing insurance products and services for low-income Africans by providing them with access to convenient and affordable policies that extend to people at the bottom of the pyramid.

Zimbabwe begins biometric voter drive to determine constituency sizes for 2023 polls

BLOCKCHAIN AND DIGITAL CURRENCIES

IRS Offers Refund on Untraded Token Rewards

■ According to a May 2021 civil lawsuit filed by the couple, Joshua and Jessica Jarrett, any tokens gained through proof-of-stake should be considered "new property" created by the taxpayer—and therefore not income which "comes in" to the taxpayer. Tokens gained through staking (or any other newly created property) must be first converted into a "readily accessible form of wealth" before being taxed.

This means that no taxable event occurs until tokens are sold.

India set to introduce 30% Crypto Tax and Digital Currency

■ The Reserve Bank of India will launch its digital currency in the year starting April 1. The nation also plans to tax the income from the transfer of virtual assets at 30%, adding legitimacy to cryptocurrency use in the country.

APRIL 1

the Reserve Bank of India will launch its digital currency

Botswana passes Virtual Asset Bill to Regulate Crypto

■ Botswana's lawmakers have passed a bill to regulate trading in cryptocurrencies and digital tokens. The new rules require anyone seeking to offer cryptocurrencies or digital tokens in Botswana to get a license from the Non-Bank Financial Institutions Regulatory Authority and adhere to a list of conditions.

Nestcoin raises $6.45 million in pre-seed capital to accelerate crypto and Web3 adoption in frontier markets

■ Nestcoin, a company building, operating, and investing in web3 applications, announced that it has raised $6.45 million in pre-seed capital. The funding will enable the company to expand its global operations and invest in building products that will help accelerate crypto adoption and financial freedom for people in frontier markets.

LEGALTECH

Legal Innovation and Tech Fest launches 2022 Trends Research Report

■ The Legal Innovation and Tech Fest has launched the 2022 Trends Research Report. The 2022 research report provides additional findings to the 2021 research, reflecting not only how the industry has been transformed through innovative use of digital technology, but also how the legal community has had to adapt to cope with the impact of the pandemic. The report also covers the new concerns and goals relating to safety, sustainability and personal well-being, that have emerged because of that change.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mozilla Common Voice dataset grows by 30% adding 8 New languages

■ Mozilla Common Voice is an open-source initiative to make voice technology more inclusive. Contributors donate speech data to a public dataset, which anyone can then use to train voice-enabled technology. The platform now includes 8 new languages, one of which is Swahili. The inclusion will allow partners to better develop data fueled innovative projects.

DATA PROTECTION

NFTs offer new method to control personal health information

■ A global, multidisciplinary team of scholars in ethics, law and informatics led by bioethicists at Baylor College of Medicine wrote one of the first commentaries on how NFTs, or non fungible tokens could be repurposed for the healthcare industry. The researchers propose that the tool could help patients gain more control over their personal health information. NFT digital contracts could provide an opportunity for patients to specify who can access their personal health information and to track how it is shared. NFTs could be used to democratize health data and help individuals regain control and participate more in decisions about who can see and use their health information," said Dr. Kristin Kostick-Quenet, first author of the paper and assistant professor at the Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy at Baylor.

Belgian DPA fines IAB Europe 250K euros over consent framework GDPR violations

■ The Belgian Data Protection Authority fined IAB Europe 250,000 euros Wednesday, ruling its Transparency and Consent Framework, used by much of the advertising industry in the European Union, does not comply with several EU General Data Protection Regulation provisions. Through data processing under the TCF, which "facilitates the management of users' preferences for online personalised advertising," the DPA found IAB Europe acts as a data controller and can be held responsible for potential GDPR violations. The authority also ruled IAB Europe did not establish a legal basis for processing and failed to appoint a data protection officer, conduct a data protection impact assessment, or maintain a register of processing activities. The DPA also argued it is difficult for users to "maintain control over their personal data" under the framework, as the information provided is "too generic and vague to allow users to understand the nature and scope of the processing." The DPA's Litigation Chamber imposed "serious sanctions … because the TCF may lead to a loss of control of their personal information by large groups of citizens." It gave IAB Europe two months to present an action plan that brings the current version of the Transparency and Consent Framework into compliance. IAB Europe was also ordered to permanently delete personal data already processed in the TCF system "from all its IT systems, files and data carriers, and from the IT systems, files and data carriers of processors contracted by IAB Europe."

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

IPO launches new strategy to address IP crime and infringement

■ The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has today published the UK's new Intellectual Property (IP) Counter-Infringement Strategy. The new 5 year strategy represents a step change in the IPO's drive to protect IP rights. By partnering with others to set a global gold standard, it aims to make UK IP rights - and rights owned by UK businesses internationally - the best protected in the world. The strategy seeks to establish how enforcement agencies, government and industry can work together to build upon and improve current structures, ensuring that IP infringement is tackled coherently as a strategic economic and social threat - at home and internationally.
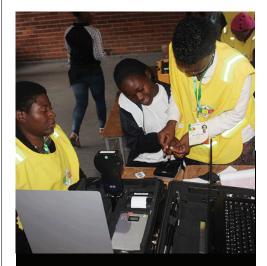
Facebook's crypto project sold after political backlash

■ The Diem Association — a group Facebook spearheaded to launch the Diem stablecoin — said Monday it will sell its intellectual property and assets to the California bank Silvergate, a go-to firm for the crypto industry. The announcement caps a nearly three-year odyssey on the part of Facebook and its partners to launch a digital currency, which was first dubbed Libra in 2019 until its rebranding as Diem in 2020. Lawmakers and regulators in the United States and Europe ultimately derailed Diem's ambitions, stoked by fears around how such an offering on the scale of Facebook would impact the financial system and the control central banks assert over money. The so-called stablecoin — a type of cryptocurrency tied to other kinds of assets — never launched.

DIGITAL IDENTITY

Biometric banking requirement coming in Ghana, unmet by half of Nigerian accounts

■ From July 1, all banking and financial transactions in Ghana will be completed only upon presentation of the biometric ID known as the Ghana Card. Any other ID document shall not be accepted as a requirement for this purpose, according to a recent statement signed by the Secretary of the Bank of Ghana (BoG) Sandra Thompson. The move to privilege the biometrics-backed ID credential, the BoG says, is intended to safeguard the security of the banking system, and is also in conformity with Regulation 7 of the National Identity Register, 2012 (L.I. 2111) which provides that as from July 1, 2022, the Ghana Card will be the only ID document accepted for financial operations at all institutions licensed and regulated by the BoG. The institutions involved in this operation, according to the BoG, are banks, specialized deposit-taking institutions, non-deposit taking financial institutions, payment service providers and dedicated electronic money users, and forex bureaus and credit reference bureaus.

Any other ID document shall not be accepted as a requirement for banking and financial transactions.

Secretary of the Bank of Ghana, Sandra Thompson.

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DIGITAL IDENTITY

Zimbabwe begins biometric voter drive to determine constituency sizes for 2023 polls

■ A biometric voter registration process to guide the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) on a planned delimitation exercise in September ahead of the 2023 general elections in the country is underway according to local reports. The registration exercise will inform the ZEC on how to carve out constituencies for said elections. The notice calls on potential voters to take along their national ID documents such as ID cards, waiting pass or valid passports to registration centers. It also notes that all those with the 'alien' tag to their IDs can be allowed to register if they meet the conditions spelt out in the country's 2013 constitution, according to The Chronicle.

Contactless biometrics app to play key role in Pakistan's digital wallet rollout

■ Pakistan is claiming a world- first for using contactless biometrics on mobile devices to enroll individuals to its national ID system, and plans to launch its digital wallet by leveraging the app's early success. The country's National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) launched the Pak Identity mobile application, or PAK-ID in 2021.

The app's initial testing on 75,000 overseas Pakistanis has been declared a success by NADRA CEO Tariq Malik. Overseas app users were able to use the app to register for their 'Nicop' national identity cards, encouraging NADRA to take the next step to digital wallet, which will provide a unique digital ID. The digital identity wallet is also expected to be linked to Pakistan's biometric SIM registry, and was first announced in late-2021.

EVENTS

Africa Tech Summit Nairobi - 23rd - 24th February

Africa Tech Summit Nairobi connects tech leaders from the African ecosystem and international players under one roof. Network with key stakeholders including tech corporates, mobile operators, fintechs, DeFi & crypto ventures, investors, leading start-ups, regulators and industry stakeholders driving business and investment forward. Following successful Summits in Rwanda, the fourth edition convenes in Nairobi, Kenya.

Adaptive Leadership Excellence Programme - 3rd February

The Leadership Group Limited extends an invitation to attend a Leadership Excellence Programme themed: Adaptive Leadership: Embracing Agility to Succeed in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambitious (VUCA) work Environment which will take place on 3rd February 2022 from 8:30am to 4:00pm at Radisson Blu Hotel, Arboretum. The programme aims to strengthen participants' leadership capabilities as you seek to steer your organization towards further growth and competitiveness.

Mozilla Festival 7th-10th March 2022

MozFest is a celebration for, by, and about people who love the internet, showcasing world-changing ideas and technology through exhibitions, talks and interactive sessions. It will be a unique hybrid: part art, tech and society convening, part maker festival, and the premiere gathering for activists in diverse global movements fighting for a more humane digital world.

Tech Unite Africa 28th-29th January

The conference will take place in January and will bring together tech companies and enthusiasts from all over the world. The two-day conference and seminar sessions will allow IT enthusiasts to interact and discuss their ideas. The event also provides a wonderful opportunity for tech and related sectors to attract new customers and clients.

Join our membership and be a part of a great community that includes legal and tech professionals, students, start-ups, organizations, and government representatives. Over the past year, members have benefited through Networking Opportunities, Collaboration Opportunities, Invitations to speak at events, Mentorship, Access to TheLawyer's Hub Innovation Space, and cutting-edge technology tools. This year, we have revamped our offers to make it even better and more accessible to many across Kenya & beyond our borders. These benefits include;

1. CODING FOR LAWYERS

Lawyers need to learn the fundamentals of coding as the legal industry becomes more tech and data-driven. The Lawyers Hub has taken the initiative to ensure that its members develop these skills by curating a coding course for members.

2. BOOK CLUB

The aim of our book club is to bring together like minded individuals through shared learning in books, to understand diverse perspectives and increase our members' systematic reading habits, fostering growth by creating a safe environment to share or debate ideas.

New read: No Rules Rules; Netflix and the culture of Reinvention by Reed Hasting and Erin Meyer. Applications to join are open.
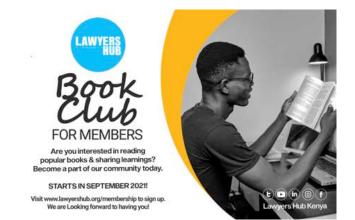

3. DANCE CLASS

We care about our members' mental health and fitness as these are crucial to everyone's wellbeing. The Lawyers Hub hosts two choreographed dance classes every Friday that will tick all your mental health boxes in Upper Hill at Ack Garden House. You also get to network with working groups.

Your 1st dance class is on the house. Join us!

4. DISCOUNTS ON LAWYERS HUB AMENITIES

Have you been looking for an office to work from? Tired of working from home and need a change in the work environment? Having issues with power or the internet? The Lawyers Hub has amazing deals on its amenities for members such as 10% discounts on virtual office, private office, hot desks, meeting and conference rooms, and event space with great features suited to help you take your business to the next level. We also have amazing deals on our media and events services for virtual, physical, and hybrid events if you are looking to convene conferences, trainings, host webinars, launches, AGMs, you name it!

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