



Current Affairs

02 Apr, 2025

SBI Card appoints Salila Pande as MD and CEO



1. SBI Card appoints Salila Pande as MD and CEO

SBI Card has appointed Salila Pande as its new Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO). She succeeds the outgoing MD & CEO and brings extensive experience in the banking and financial sector. Pande is expected to drive SBI Card's growth strategy, focusing on digital transformation and expanding the customer base. Her leadership will play a crucial role in strengthening the company's market position in India's credit card industry. The appointment aligns with SBI Card's vision to enhance financial inclusion and innovation in the payments sector.



Foot notes:

- **Background and Experience:** Pande has nearly 30 years of experience in banking and financial services, having joined the State Bank of India (SBI) in 1995 as a probationary officer.
- **Previous Roles:** Prior to her current role, Pande served as the Chief General Manager of the Mumbai Metro Circle, overseeing SBI's retail banking activities. She also held key positions like Vice President - Mid Office at SBI Singapore and President & CEO of SBI California.
- **Education and Certifications:** Pande holds a postgraduate degree in physics and is a certified Financial Risk Manager (FRM) from GARP, USA, and a certified associate of the Indian Institute of Bankers (CAIIB).

- **Term of Appointment:** Pande's appointment as MD and CEO is for a period of two years, subject to regulatory and shareholder approvals.
- **Interim Dividend:** SBI Card also declared an interim dividend of ₹2.50 per share for the financial year 2024-25, with a record date of February 25, 2025.

2. Shirley Botchwey Becomes First African Woman Secretary General of Commonwealth

Shirley Botchwey has been appointed as the Secretary-General off the Commonwealth, becoming the first African woman to hold the position. A seasoned diplomat from Ghana, she previously served as the country's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Her leadership is expected to bring a fresh perspective to global cooperation and development within the 56-member organization. Botchwey aims to strengthen economic ties, climate action, and youth empowerment across Commonwealth nations. Her appointment marks a historic milestone in the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion.



Foot notes:

- **Historic Appointment:** Botchwey assumed office on April 1, 2025, succeeding Patricia Scotland, who was the first woman to hold the position.
- **Leadership Experience:** With over 20 years of experience in diplomacy, international relations, governance, and public service, Botchwey brings a wealth of knowledge to her new role.
- **Prior Roles:** Before her appointment, Botchwey served as Ghana's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration from 2017 to 2024 and was a member of Ghana's National Security Council.
- **Commonwealth Priorities:** Botchwey has outlined six priority areas, including democracy, trade and investment, youth development, climate change, and support for small island developing states.
- **Breaking Barriers:** As the first African woman to hold the position, Botchwey's appointment marks a significant milestone in the Commonwealth's history and paves the way for greater representation and diversity.

3. Kraigg Brathwaite resigns as West Indies Test captain

Kraigg Brathwaite has resigned as the captain of the West Indies Test team. His decision comes after a challenging tenure, during which the team experienced mixed performances in international cricket. Brathwaite, who took over the captaincy in 2021, played a crucial role in stabilizing the team's batting lineup. Under his leadership, the West Indies secured notable Test victories but also faced

inconsistencies. The Cricket West Indies (CWI) is expected to announce his successor soon, focusing on the team's future in red-ball cricket.

Foot notes:

- **Reason for Resignation:** Brathwaite submitted his resignation to allow the new leadership time to establish itself before the home series against Australia.
- **Leadership Record:** During his tenure, Brathwaite led the West Indies in 39 Tests, winning 10 and losing 22 matches.
- **Notable Achievements:** Under his leadership, the West Indies achieved historic moments, including a home series victory against England in 2022 and a win over Australia at the Gabba in January 2024.
- **New Captain:** Cricket West Indies (CWI) will name a new Test captain "in the coming weeks".
- **Shai Hope's New Role:** Shai Hope has replaced Rovman Powell as the T20I captain, in addition to his responsibilities as the ODI captain.
- **Brathwaite's Future:** Although stepping down from the captaincy, Brathwaite's experience and leadership will continue to benefit the team as a senior player.



4. Pankaj Srivastava appointed as Director in the Ministry of Cooperation

Pankaj Srivastava has been appointed as a Director in the Ministry of Cooperation. His appointment is expected to strengthen policy implementation and coordination within the ministry. Srivastava brings extensive administrative experience, having served in various key government roles. His focus will be on enhancing cooperative sector reforms and promoting sustainable growth initiatives. The Ministry aims to leverage his expertise to boost rural development and cooperative enterprises across India.



Foot notes:

- **Ministry Overview:** The Ministry of Cooperation is responsible for promoting and developing cooperative societies in India, with a focus on strengthening the cooperative movement and improving the lives of farmers and rural communities.
- **Key Responsibilities:** As Director, Pankaj Srivastava will be responsible for overseeing various aspects of cooperative development, including policy formulation, project implementation, and stakeholder engagement.

- **Leadership Team:** The Ministry of Cooperation is headed by Union Minister Amit Shah, with several other key officials, including Secretary Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani and Joint Secretary Siddharth Jain.
- **Impact:** Pankaj Srivastava's appointment is expected to bring in fresh perspectives and expertise to the Ministry of Cooperation, which will help in driving cooperative development and promoting rural prosperity in India.

5. Star Air Becomes First Indian Airline to Use Aviator Revenue System

Star Air has become the first Indian airline to implement the Aviator Revenue System. This advanced system is designed to optimize revenue management and improve operational efficiency. By adopting Aviator, Star Air aims to enhance pricing strategies, demand forecasting, and overall profitability. The move reflects the airline's commitment to leveraging technology for better customer service and financial performance. This milestone positions Star Air as a leader in innovation within India's aviation industry.



Foot notes:

- **First Indian Airline:** Star Air has become the first Indian airline to use the Aviator Revenue Management system, marking a significant milestone in the airline's revenue management capabilities.
- **Revenue Growth:** The Aviator system is expected to help Star Air maximize passenger revenue, with Anil Rajvani, GM of Revenue Management at Star Air, already reporting revenue growth since its implementation.
- **User-Friendly Interface:** The Aviator system is designed to be automated and user-friendly, making it easier for Star Air's revenue management team to optimize pricing and inventory.
- **Partnership with Maxamation:** Star Air partnered with Maxamation, the developer of the Aviator system, to implement the revenue management solution.
- **Industry Benchmark:** The adoption of the Aviator system sets a new benchmark for revenue management in the Indian aviation industry, with Star Air poised to benefit from increased efficiency and revenue growth.
- **Future Plans:** With the Aviator system in place, Star Air is well-positioned to achieve its ambitious growth plans, including expanding its fleet to 25 aircraft by 2027 and enhancing connectivity across Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities in India.

6. Yahoo appoints Josh Line as Chief Marketing Officer

Yahoo has appointed Josh Line as its new Chief Marketing Officer (CMO). He brings extensive experience in brand strategy and digital marketing. Line will be responsible for enhancing Yahoo's global brand presence and driving user engagement. His appointment aligns with the company's vision to expand its digital ecosystem and strengthen market positioning. Yahoo aims to leverage his expertise to accelerate growth and innovation across its platforms.

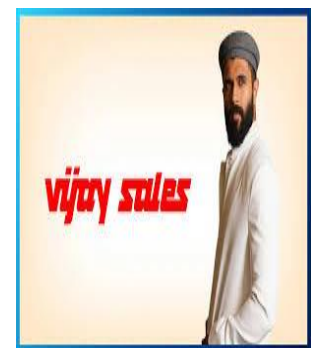


Foot notes:

- **Background and Experience:** Line was previously the Chief Brand Officer at Paramount Global, where he led enterprise-wide marketing efforts and played a key role in launching Paramount+ and growing the direct-to-consumer streaming business.
- **Marketing Expertise:** Line has over two decades of experience in marketing, having worked with top brands like CBS, MTV, Paramount Pictures, and Pluto TV, and led marketing, creative, and digital studios at Comedy Central, Paramount Network, and TV Land.
- **Goals and Objectives:** Line aims to reignite love and cultural impact for the Yahoo brand, drive growth for its portfolio of leading products, and make Yahoo a trusted guide through the digital wilderness.
- **Leadership Style:** Line is known for building and leading high-performance teams, driving brand strategy, and fostering collaboration across various facets of marketing leadership.

7. Vijay Sales onboards Vijay Deverakonda as brand ambassador

Vijay Sales has onboarded popular actor Vijay Deverakonda as its brand ambassador. The collaboration aims to strengthen the brand's connection with young and tech-savvy consumers. Deverakonda's dynamic personality aligns with Vijay Sales' vision of offering top-quality electronics and home appliances. His endorsement is expected to enhance the brand's visibility and engagement across India. This partnership marks a strategic move to expand Vijay Sales' market presence and customer reach.



Foot notes:

- **Expanding Footprint:** The partnership helps Vijay Sales expand its footprint in South Indian markets, leveraging Vijay Deverakonda's immense popularity and

strong connect with young consumers across Telugu-speaking states and beyond.

- **Target Market:** Vijay Deverakonda's massive fan following and reputation for trendsetting resonate with the tech-savvy younger demographic that forms the core of Vijay Sales' target market.
- **Marketing Approach:** The collaboration will encompass a 360-degree marketing approach, including digital campaigns, in-store experiences, exclusive product lines, and targeted marketing initiatives that highlight Vijay Sales' extensive range of electronic products.
- **Social Media Leverage:** Vijay Sales plans to leverage Vijay Deverakonda's massive social media following to create innovative digital narratives that showcase the brand's product range and technological innovations.
- **Brand Vision:** The partnership aims to create a unique ecosystem where technology meets lifestyle, empowering consumers to choose the best electronic products that complement their dynamic lives.

8. Pudhari Group appoints Sanjeev Kulkarni as Vice President

Pudhari Group has appointed Sanjeev Kulkarni as its new Vice President. Kulkarni brings extensive experience in media and business management, which will help drive the group's growth strategy. His role will focus on strengthening Pudhari's presence in the regional news sector and expanding its digital footprint. The appointment aligns with the group's vision to enhance content quality and audience engagement. Kulkarni's leadership is expected to play a key role in shaping the future of Pudhari Group's media operations.



Foot notes:

- **New Role:** Sanjeev Kulkarni has joined Pudhari Group as Vice President, National Head (Sales & Marketing).
- **Previous Experience:** Kulkarni brings over 12 years of experience from his previous role as Vice President of Sales, Marketing, and Business Development at VRL Media.
- **Career Background:** Before joining VRL Media, Kulkarni worked with the Times of India Group for 8 years.
- **Responsibilities:** As Vice President, Kulkarni will oversee national sales and marketing strategies, driving growth and expansion for Pudhari Group.
- **Industry Expertise:** With his extensive experience in the media industry, Kulkarni is well-equipped to lead Pudhari Group's sales and marketing efforts.

- **Leadership Team:** Kulkarni joins Pudhari Group's leadership team, which includes notable figures like Pratapsinh Ganpatrao Jadhav, Managing Director, and Yogesh Pratapsinh Jadhav, Managing Director.

9. World Autism Awareness Day observed on April 2nd

World Autism Awareness Day is observed annually on April 2nd to raise awareness about autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The day promotes understanding, inclusion, and support for individuals with autism and their families. Various organizations and communities worldwide conduct events, campaigns, and discussions to highlight the challenges and strengths of people with autism. The United Nations established this observance in 2007 to encourage early diagnosis, research, and policies for better support systems. The theme for each year focuses on different aspects of autism awareness and advocacy.



Foot notes:

- **United Nations Recognition:** The United Nations General Assembly designated April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day in 2007 to promote awareness and encourage member nations to support research and programs for autistic individuals.
- **Raising Awareness:** The day aims to raise public awareness of autism, a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects communication, social interaction, and behavior.
- **Promoting Acceptance and Inclusion:** World Autism Awareness Day promotes acceptance and inclusion of people with autism, encouraging societies to provide equal opportunities and support for autistic individuals.
- **2025 Theme:** The theme for World Autism Awareness Day 2025 is "Advancing Neurodiversity and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)".
- **Importance of Awareness:** Raising awareness about autism is crucial to promote early detection, intervention, and support for autistic individuals, ultimately improving their quality of life.

10. Nikhil Singhal Honored with Uttar Pradesh Anmol Ratan Award

Nikhil Singhal has been honored with the Uttar Pradesh Anmol Ratan Award for his exceptional contributions to society. This prestigious award recognizes individuals who have significantly impacted their respective fields and brought pride to the state. Singhal's dedication and achievements have set a benchmark for excellence, inspiring many across Uttar Pradesh. His work has been instrumental in driving progress, innovation, and community development. The award ceremony celebrated his

relentless efforts and commitment to making a positive difference. Leaders and dignitaries praised his accomplishments, highlighting his influence on the state's growth.

Foot notes:

- **Award Ceremony:** The award ceremony took place at the iconic Taj Lucknow, hosted by the Tapasya Foundation Trust.
- **Recognition:** This award recognizes Singhal's remarkable contributions to the public relations industry and his exemplary leadership in strategic communication.
- **Presenter:** Shri Akhilesh Yadav, former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, presented the award to Singhal.
- **Achievements:** Singhal has made significant contributions to the public relations sector, influencing corporate branding, media relations, and crisis communication.
- **Previous Awards:** Singhal has received several other notable awards, including the ET Global Leader award in 2021 and the Times 40 Under 40 list in 2022.
- **Future Plans:** Singhal aims to expand Vigor Media Worldwide's global footprint, leverage emerging technologies in PR, and continue contributing to the industry through mentorship and thought leadership.



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