

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

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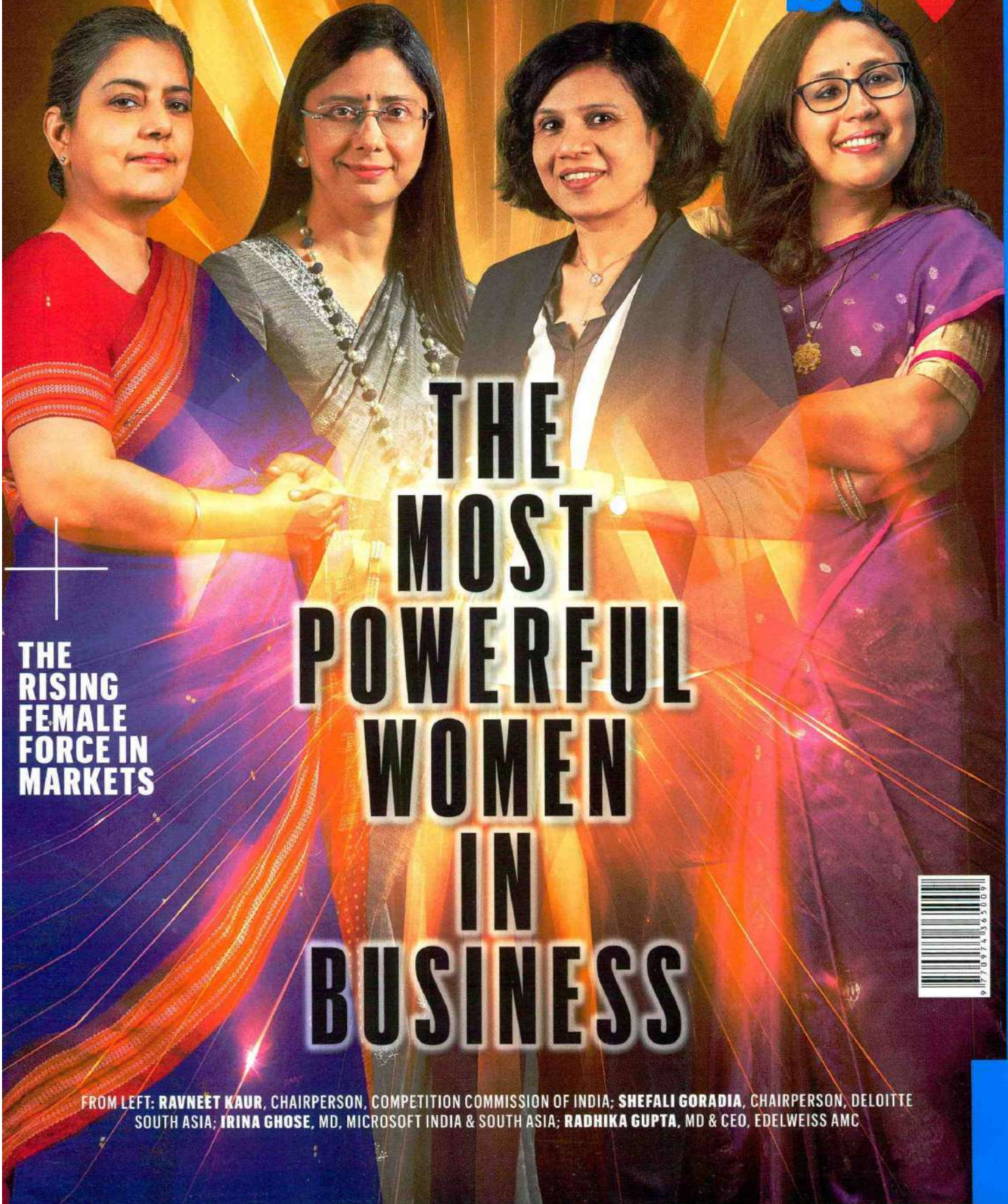
# Business Today

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On Stands | Online | On Air

**bt**

INDIA  
TODAY  
GROUP



## THE MOST POWERFUL WOMEN IN BUSINESS

THE  
RISING  
FEMALE  
FORCE IN  
MARKETS



FROM LEFT: RAVNEET KAUR, CHAIRPERSON, COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA; SHEFALI GORADIA, CHAIRPERSON, DELOITTE SOUTH ASIA; IRINA GHOSE, MD, MICROSOFT INDIA & SOUTH ASIA; RADHIKA GUPTA, MD & CEO, EDELWEISS AMC



# The Timeless Icons

Leaders who have won the BT MPW award seven times are placed in an elite list. They are super achievers, who have shown consistency of performance and influence over a considerable length of time



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- 1. ARUNA JAYANTHI • 2018
- 2. ARUNDHATI BHATTACHARYA • 2023
- 3. ASHU SUYASH • 2019
- 4. EKTA KAPOOR • 2017
- 5. FALGUNI NAYAR • 2023
- 6. KAKU NAKHATE • 2022
- 7. KALPANA MORPARIA • 2011
- 8. KIRAN MAZUMDAR-SHAW • 2010
- 9. LEENA NAIR • 2013
- 10. MADHABI PURI BUCH • 2023
- 11. MALLIKA SRINIVASAN • 2010
- 12. MEENA GANESH • 2023

- 13. NAINA LAL KIDWAI • 2010
- 14. NEELAM DHAWAN • 2016
- 15. NITA AMBANI • 2022
- 16. PALLAVI SHROFF • 2019
- 17. PREETHA REDDY • 2011
- 18. PRIYA NAIR • 2022
- 19. REKHA M. MENON • 2021
- 20. RENU SUD KARNAD • 2012
- 21. RENUKA RAMNATH • 2012
- 22. SHANTI EKAMBARAM • 2020
- 23. SHIKHA SHARMA • 2010
- 24. SHOBHANA BHARTIA • 2011
- 25. SUNEETA REDDY • 2023

- 26. SWATI PIRAMAL • 2010
- 27. VIBHA PADALKAR • 2023
- 28. VINITA BALI • 2012
- 29. VINITA GUPTA • 2016
- 30. VISHAKHA MULYE • 2017
- 31. ZARIN DARUWALA • 2018
- 32. ZIA MODY • 2011

THE YEARS CORRESPOND TO WHEN THESE LEADERS WON THEIR SEVENTH BT MPW AWARD AND THEN MOVED TO THE HALL OF FAME LIST



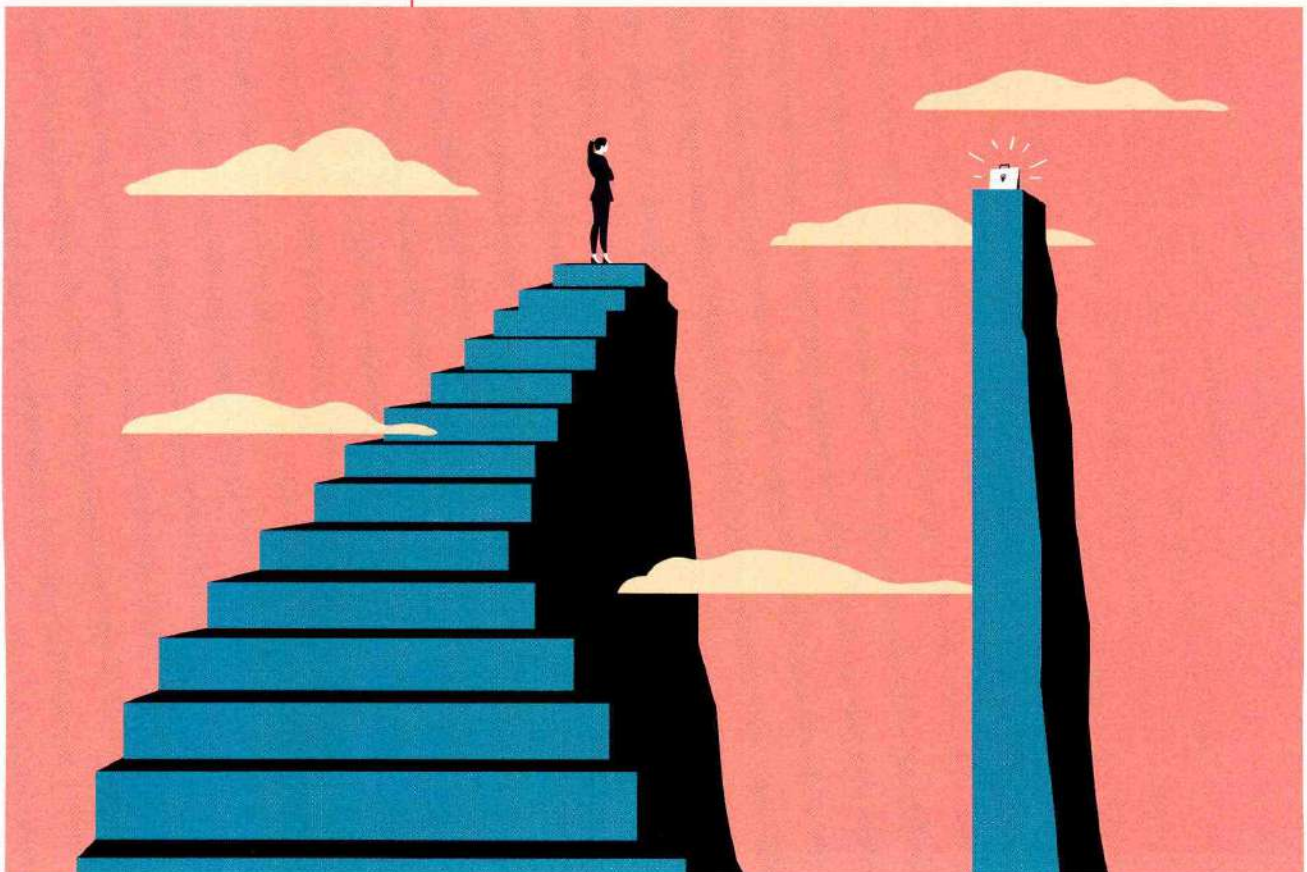


**Vinita Gupta**  
*Chief Executive  
Officer, Lupin*

# Inclusivity Still a Challenge

HOWEVER, A GREATER NUMBER OF WOMEN, GLOBALLY AS WELL AS IN INDIA, ARE VENTURING INTO ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUILDING SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATIONS

**OVER THE PAST** two decades, there has been a strong emphasis on promoting diversity at the workplace. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2024, while women's employment rates have risen globally, progress for women in the workplace has slowed down overall. The report elucidates that women make up less than half of the global workforce and hold only a quarter of the top C-suite positions. In fields like STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), women continue to represent only a fraction of the workforce. Cultural perceptions around carer responsibilities and uncertainty about career prospects post-marriage also add complexity, often holding women back from reaching their full potential.





However, we are seeing a greater number of women globally as well as in India, venturing into entrepreneurship and building successful organisations. It's inspiring to see this shift, where ability and true potential are rising beyond gender and women are playing a key role in shaping the narrative for businesses and communities.

Despite progress, inclusivity in the workplace remains a challenge. Due to a lack of inclusive culture and promotion disparities, many women struggle with a sense of belonging, which further limits their career progression. A recent PwC survey highlights this disparity, revealing that women often struggle more than men to secure their first promotion, a situation that can have a lasting impact on their careers.

On the personal side, societal expectations that women should shoulder the primary carer responsibilities can impact work-life balance. For many, this becomes an emotional pressure as they pursue career ambitions post-marriage. Overcoming these challenges requires supportive systems at work and at home to help women balance family and career, return to work post-maternity, and pursue their professional goals.

To empower, help women thrive, and attain their full potential, companies are increasingly offering benefits like flexible working arrangements, parental support, and childcare options. These enable women to manage carer responsibilities while advancing professionally. Meritocracy in all aspects, from recruitment, compensation, and promotions to board appointments, creates a fair playing field for a rich, diverse culture, skill development, and leadership.

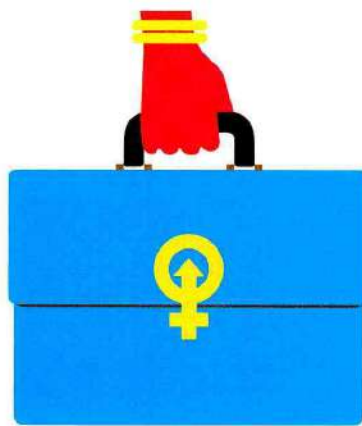
As technology rapidly transforms business, motivated talent is essential. Inclusivity fosters this talent, supporting growth and innovation. Companies should focus on building a culture where everyone can thrive and constructively challenge the status quo, driving value through continuous improvement and innovation.

Platforms that encourage open dialogue and mentorship can also serve as powerful motivators. Witnessing women who have overcome obstacles can inspire others to pursue their goals. In my career, I have met many successful women who emphasise the importance of mentorship and speaking up to empower oneself. Digital platforms can also provide valuable networking opportunities and knowledge-sharing without disrupting daily routines, enabling women to assess skill gaps, realise their potential and make progress towards their professional goals.

A strong personal support system is invaluable for women pursuing career ambitions. When I had my son, I learnt very quickly the value of creating the right external support system around me, prioritising what is important both at home and at work, and the importance of taking care of myself to bring my best in all my endeavours. I made choices like staying close to work, which enabled me to make time for everything that was important for me at work and home. Carving out time for reflection and self-care is essential for personal and professional growth.

For me, the potential and passion of building the business has been a great motivator. To work alongside talented, diverse teams that bring different perspectives is energising. The dynamic nature of our industry keeps me on my toes to continuously evolve and learn, adapt our strategies and tactics to achieve our long-term vision.

I have always followed my father's guiding principles: humility, integrity, and a commitment to continuous learning. Believing in oneself and committing to a purpose is, in my experience, the most powerful driver for success. Identify your purpose, dedicate yourself fully to achieving it, and don't limit your ambitions. Open your mind, pursue your dreams passionately, and success will follow. **BT**



**Women make up less than half of the global workforce and hold only a quarter of the top C-suite positions, per a WEF report**

*Views are personal*