OUTLOOK BUSINESS

November 2026

THINK BEYOND. STAY AHEAD.



INDIA'S CHANGEMAKERS

DRIVING TRANSFORMATION, SHAPING TOMORROW

India Changemakers celebrates the visionaries who are redefining India's growth story through bold ideas, decisive leadership and meaningful action. By challenging conventions, transforming industries and creating lasting impact, these leaders are addressing today's challenges while shaping tomorrow's opportunities. Their journeys reflect the ambition, resilience and innovation driving India towards a stronger, more progressive and globally influential future.

This Feature is curated by the Brand Team of Outlook Publishing India Pvt. Ltd.



Reimagining Indian Agriculture

Mr. Dhanuka's Vision to Turn Challenges into Opportunities

As climate volatility, evolving crop threats and pressure on farm productivity reshape Indian agriculture, Rahul Dhanuka, Managing Director of Dhanuka Agritech, is advocating a science led, technology enabled and farmer first approach.

INDIAN AGRICULTURE NEEDS A NEW WAY OF THINKING

Indian agriculture has always adapted to changing conditions, but today's challenges call for a fundamental shift. Erratic monsoons, evolving pest patterns and rising input costs are putting pressure on farm productivity. Traditional approaches built around predictable seasons are becoming less effective as uncertainty becomes the norm.

For Rahul Dhanuka, Managing Director of Dhanuka Agritech, the answer lies in rethinking how agriculture anticipates problems and delivers value to farmers. Rather than treating each difficult season as an isolated challenge, he advocates building resilience into the way the industry operates.

The 2026 southwest monsoon illustrated the challenge. India received 759 mm of rainfall against a long period average of 869 mm, a shortfall of 12.6%. Uneven rainfall can disrupt sowing, alter pest patterns and complicate decisions about agricultural inputs. Businesses must therefore anticipate changing conditions and equip farmers with the right products, information and support.

FROM SELLING PRODUCTS TO SOLVING FARM PROBLEMS

Crop protection has traditionally operated around established agricultural calendars. Products are stocked ahead

> From unpredictable monsoons to emerging crop challenges, Mr. Dhanuka is championing practical, science backed solutions to help farmers navigate uncertainty.

of sowing and distributed according to seasonal demand. Unpredictable weather, however, can shift pest attacks and disease outbreaks, leaving farmers without timely access to solutions.

Addressing this requires a responsive business model. Dhanuka Agritech's distribution network includes 44 warehouses, more than 6,500 distributors and 80,000 retailers, serving over more than 1 crore farmers. Its value lies not only in product availability, but also in responding to changing agricultural requirements.

More than a product a farmer needs to know which solution is appropriate, when it should be applied and how to use it responsibly. Field demonstrations, farmer meetings and timely advisory are therefore integral to problem solving. The future of crop protection will depend on how effectively companies understand and address challenges in the field.

As per Mr. Rahul Dhanuka "Responding to the evolving needs of farmers requires agility and a commitment to providing solutions that address their challenges, rather than simply selling what we have to offer."

MAKING SCIENCE WORK FOR FARMERS

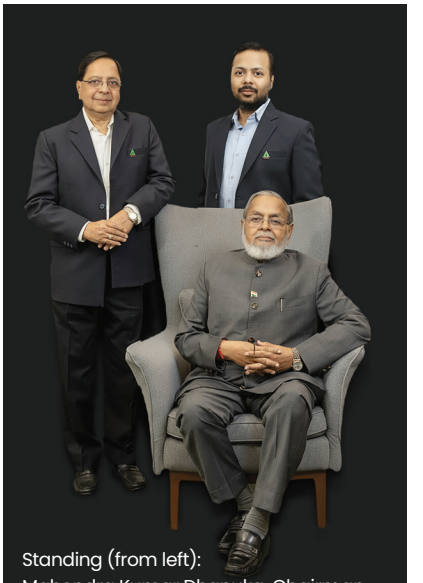
Climate variability is changing the conditions under which crops grow and pests thrive. Research and innovation are essential to protecting productivity. At Dhanuka Agritech, new molecules contributed nearly 15% of revenue in FY25, compared with 9% three years earlier. The company has a record of paying dividends and board recommended a final dividend of ₹2 per equity share FY 25-26, it also approved a share buyback of up to 70 crores. Their history includes documented example of private equity value creation. Lighthouse invested ₹35 crore in Dhanuka Agritech in late 2010 through a preferential allotment. By March 2015, it had received approximately ₹95 crore in proceeds from selling slightly more than half of its stake.

Its portfolio spans approximately 90 products and more than 300 registrations across different crops and farmer requirements. International partnerships support efforts to bring global agricultural science to Indian farmers.

> By bringing innovation, precision technology and farmer centric thinking together, he is helping shape a more resilient approach to agricultural growth.

Dhanuka Agritech is launching seven new products out of which POLIN, a Japanese technology-based solution has been recently launched for managing paddy diseases. Dhanuka is expanding its international global commercial rights from Bayer from two fungicides across more than 220 countries.

Manufacturing capability is another part of this strategy. The company has acquired land in Nagpur, Maharashtra, for a manufacturing facility involving an investment of up to ₹200 crore, with planned annual capacity of 23,000 tonnes. Operations are expected to begin by April 2028. Such investments underline the importance of strengthening research, manufacturing and supply capabilities before the next challenge arrives.



Standing (from left): Mahendra Kumar Dhanuka, Chairman, and Rahul Dhanuka, Managing Director. Seated: Dr. R.G. Agarwal, Chairman Emeritus.

TAKING PRECISION AGRICULTURE TO MORE FARMERS

Technology can help farmers respond to emerging agricultural challenges, but its impact depends on accessibility. Agricultural drones enable crop protection applications within narrow weather windows while using less water and much less time than conventional knapsack spraying. Recognising this potential, Dhanuka Agritech invested in agricultural drone company IoTechWorld Avigation in 2021 and partnered with agricultural universities to conduct bio efficacy trials of drone applied crop protection products.

For smaller farmers, affordability remains a key barrier. Per acre service models, trained operators and suitable formulations can make advanced technology accessible without requiring investment in expensive equipment. Digital advisory, including weather linked alerts, pest forecasts and local language guidance, can further help farmers make timely, informed decisions. Demonstration plots and trusted field engagement remain essential to building confidence and encouraging adoption.

BUILDING AN ECOSYSTEM THAT SOLVES PROBLEMS

Transforming Indian agriculture requires collaboration between industry, government, research institutions and farming communities. Science led regulatory processes can accelerate access to proven innovations without compromising safety. Stronger measures against counterfeit agricultural inputs, accessible precision farming services and responsive crop insurance can help farmers manage emerging risks.

For Dhanuka, agricultural leadership means moving beyond product innovation to solutions that address real farming challenges. Aligned with Dhanuka Agritech's vision of "Transforming India Through Agriculture," this approach places scientific progress, practical knowledge and farmer accessibility at its core. By anticipating challenges, investing for the long term and making farmers' needs central to innovation, the industry can build a more resilient agricultural ecosystem and turn uncertainty into opportunities for sustainable growth.

Dr. Sashi Kanta Saikia
Building Institutions, Shaping the Future of Leadership

Through a distinctive approach to institutional governance, digital transformation and environmental responsibility, Dr. Sashi Kanta Saikia is demonstrating how leadership rooted in accountability, resilience and purpose can redefine educational institutions.

BEYOND ADMINISTRATION: THE MAKING OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The true measure of leadership is not the authority an individual commands, but the capacity to build systems that endure, cultures that inspire and institutions that continuously evolve. This principle lies at the heart of Dr. Sashi Kanta Saikia's leadership philosophy, reflected in his work as Principal of Dibrugarh Hanumanbax Surajmall Kanoi College (Autonomous), Assam. His approach offers a compelling perspective on how educational institutions can balance heritage with innovation, administrative efficiency with human values and institutional growth with social responsibility.

For Dr. Saikia, transformation begins with a fundamental shift in perspective: leadership must move beyond managing existing systems to creating institutions capable of adapting, innovating and delivering sustained value. His tenure at DHSK College illustrates this philosophy through initiatives spanning digital governance, workplace accountability, campus sustainability and academic infrastructure. Majuli College situated in the world largest River Island and one of Heritage College, being a Principal three years three months time Majuli College also changed according to this line.

Since assuming charge on 19 June 2015, he has championed the adoption of digital systems, including online student union elections, digital attendance, AI enabled smart boards, paperless administrative processes and sensor based infrastructure.



DR. SASHI KANTA SAIKIA
Principal, DHSK College, Dibugarh

The Karmabandhu application, designed to maintain daily work records of Grade IV employees, reflects his emphasis on structured accountability. These initiatives represent a broader leadership principle: technology creates institutional value when it improves processes, strengthens transparency and supports more effective administration.

Yet his approach extends beyond technological modernisation. He places equal importance on building a culture in which institutional responsibility is shared rather than delegated. Through the college's Green Club, cleanliness initiatives have mobilised employees and students around sustained environmental action. The movement reflects his belief that organisational culture is shaped less by formal instructions than by consistent participation and example. His earlier initiation of a cleanliness movement at Majuli College in 2012 further demonstrates the continuity of this commitment.

Dr. Sashi Kanta Saikia's leadership philosophy is rooted in a life shaped by adversity. Growing up in acute poverty, he sold betel leaf and areca nut and undertook demanding labour to finance his education. Despite failing his Higher Secondary examination, he persevered, eventually graduating in second position under Dibrugarh University and excelling result in top in Management at Gauhati University. These experiences shaped his belief that resilience, discipline and continuous learning are fundamental to personal and institutional growth.

His professional journey across Dispur College, Dibru College and Majuli College laid the foundation for his institution building vision. He is a regular columnist of vernicular Assamese News paper and an accomplished author with more than 40 books, he also contributes to literary, educational and social organisations. Recognised with the title Karmasurya and featured in Forbes Magazine's October 2026 issue, Dr. Saikia exemplifies purpose driven leadership, demonstrating how vision, accountability and collective responsibility can translate institutional aspirations into lasting societal impact. Dr. Saikia was Brand Ambessador of SBM, Assam, he also received Best Journalist Award, Best Principal Performance Award, Best Educationist Award, Education Excellence Award, Seuj Ratna Award, Seuji Pragjyotish Sanman, Dibaru Hitoishi Award, Academic Leadership Award, Peace Ambessador Award, Asom Gaurav Bota, Dinabandhu Title, Syed Abdul Malik Memorial Award, Bir Chilarai Award, North East Leadership Award, Best Administrator Award, Shapers of the Future Award, Majuli Bandhu Title, Assam Rising Educational Reformer Award, Sahitya Pushpa Award, Nareswar Mahatta Memorial Samaj Sewa Bota, Guru Gaurav Bota etc. He was felicitated by more than 300 Socio-cultural and Govt. organization. He is also engaged more than 20 regional, national and international organizations as Advisor, President, Secretary and members. He started his daily life from early morning at 3.45 AM.

Creating Value, Inspiring Growth Shaping Tomorrow

With a strong foundation in industrial enterprise and a strategic outlook on emerging opportunities, Mr. Veeraj Shah, Chairman of Veeraj Group, exemplifies leadership driven by business acumen, diversification and long term value creation.



VEERAJ SHAH
Chairman of Veeraj Group

An established industrialist and visionary business leader, Mr. Veeraj Shah is expanding business horizons through strategic investments, sectoral diversification and a forward looking approach to India's economic growth.

In a rapidly evolving business landscape, enduring leadership is defined by the ability to build strong enterprises, recognise emerging opportunities and create sustainable value. Mr. Veeraj Shah, Chairman of Veeraj Group, embodies this approach through a leadership journey shaped by industrial experience, strategic foresight and a clear vision for long term growth.

His entrepreneurial journey began with Veeraj Chemtech, where he developed a strong foundation in manufacturing, supply chains and relationship driven business operations. This experience shaped his business philosophy, emphasising operational discipline, calculated expansion and sustainable value creation. Over time, this foundation has supported the development of a diversified portfolio spanning infrastructure, packaging, mobility solutions and emerging consumer businesses.

Shah's approach to business reflects an understanding that growth requires both a strong foundation and the ability to adapt to changing market dynamics. His interests across sectors demonstrate a willingness to explore new opportunities while drawing on the operational expertise and commercial understanding gained through industrial enterprise. This balance between established business fundamentals and emerging possibilities remains central to his outlook.

A significant dimension of his forward looking perspective is his interest in Lothal, Gujarat. Located near the upcoming National Maritime Heritage Complex and strategically connected to the Dholera Special Investment Region, Lothal presents opportunities across tourism, infrastructure, logistics and investment.

For Shah, the region's potential extends beyond conventional development. He sees an opportunity to support a broader economic ecosystem in which heritage, tourism, infrastructure and commercial activity can complement one another. Such a perspective highlights the importance of identifying emerging growth corridors early and recognising how strategic investments can contribute to regional development over time.

His interest in electric vehicle mobility infrastructure and new age consumer businesses further reflects his ability to look beyond traditional industrial boundaries. As industries evolve and customer expectations change, businesses must remain responsive while maintaining a focus on execution, scalability and long term viability. Shah's diversified interests reflect this understanding of the relationship between experience, innovation and business growth.

What distinguishes established business leadership is not diversification alone, but the ability to pursue opportunities with strategic clarity and a commitment to enduring value. Shah's approach reflects the importance of building enterprises that can adapt to changing economic conditions while contributing to broader commercial and regional development.

As India continues to advance its ambitions in infrastructure, manufacturing, mobility and entrepreneurship, experienced industrialists have an important role in shaping the country's next phase of growth. Through his industrial foundation, diversified business interests and focus on emerging opportunities, Mr. Veeraj Shah represents a leadership approach centred on creating value today while recognising the possibilities of tomorrow.



The Legacy of Kindness Beyond the Ledger

DR. ANEEL KASHI MURARKA
Managing Director of Mirachem Industriies

Some are born with legacies, while others create their own. Dr Aneel Kashi Murarka belongs to the latter category, an Industrialist and philanthropist who believes that the true measure of success lies not in what one accumulates, but in what one gives back to society

Recently, while travelling through Rajasthan, Dr Murarka stopped at a local village school to distribute chocolates among children. What began as a simple gesture of kindness soon turned into a meaningful intervention. During his visit, he discovered that the school lacked a proper drinking water facility. Moved by the students' predicament, he decided to fund its construction. Within two months, the facility was made ready, bringing clean drinking water to children who might otherwise have continued to struggle. For the students, he was a stranger who arrived with chocolates and left behind something far more precious: a lasting source of comfort and care.This incident captures the philosophy that drives Dr Murarka's life. For him, philanthropy is not about grand announcements; it is about recognising a need and doing something about it

As Managing Director of Mirachem Industriies, a speciality textiles manufacturing company, he has built his professional career alongside a deep commitment to social responsibility. He often emphasises that whatever the company earns must ultimately find a way back into society through social work and development projects. His approach reflects a simple conviction: prosperity becomes meaningful when it improves the lives of others

Through his social enterprise, Ample Missiion, Dr Murarka has championed a diverse range of initiatives. From hygiene and cleanliness awareness programmes for schoolchildren to pothole-filling drives aimed at protecting motorists, his work addresses challenges that directly affect everyday lives. His Meals from Maa campaign provides food to homeless and underprivileged people every day, driven by the belief that no one should have to sleep hungry. His contribution also extends to creating essential public infrastructure through family owned Samarpn – C B Murarka Charitable Trust. Crematoriums, air-conditioned bus stops, school auditoriums, quarters for women police personnel, temples, lawyers' chambers and public toilets are among the facilities associated with his development initiatives. These projects may not always attract headlines, but their impact is felt by communities long after the work is completed

Dr Murarka also understands the power of cinema to inspire social change. Through short films addressing pressing social issues, he has used storytelling to reach audiences beyond the immediate beneficiaries of his charitable work. His Swachh Bharat-themed short film, featuring Kangana Ranaut and Amitabh Bachchan, received recognition when Prime Minister Narendra Modi who retweeted the film. His association with the cleanliness movement subsequently led to his appointment as a Swachh Bharat ambassador by the Government of India. Friends from the film industry have also supported his efforts to bring socially relevant stories to wider audiences

His commitment received another significant recognition when he was felicitated on Kaun Banega Crorepati 17 by legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan with the Force for Good Heroes honour from the Aditya Birla Group, celebrating his contribution to society.What makes Dr Murarka's journey particularly inspiring is its underlying message. Philanthropy does not always require enormous resources or extraordinary circumstances. Sometimes, it begins with noticing what others overlook and possessing the courage to act

Beyond Traffic Signals: Reimagining India's Smart Cities

How Darpan Kale is transforming existing traffic infrastructure into intelligent platforms for safer mobility, smarter governance and citizen focused urban development.

A city can build more roads, install more signals and deploy more cameras. But if its infrastructure cannot communicate intelligently with its citizens, a critical opportunity remains untapped.

India's urban challenge is no longer limited to moving vehicles from one destination to another. Congestion, road safety, fragmented public communication and the growing demands on civic authorities call for solutions that make existing infrastructure work harder.

This is the problem Mr. Darpan Kale, Founder and Managing Director of DPIFS Solutions Pvt. Ltd., set out to solve. Rather than viewing traffic signals as devices that simply regulate movement, he saw an opportunity to transform them into intelligent communication points that could serve a wider public purpose.

His answer was the Smart Traffic Time System (STTS), a patented technology that reimagines the role of traffic signals in India's evolving urban landscape.

> By turning everyday traffic signals into intelligent communication and traffic management platforms, Darpan Kale is addressing urban challenges through innovation, technology and sustainable infrastructure.

TURNING WAITING TIME INTO PUBLIC VALUE

Every red light creates a brief pause in the daily movement of a city. For Mr. Kale, that pause represented an opportunity to improve how information reaches people. Could an existing traffic junction also become a channel for public announcements, emergency alerts and relevant digital communication?

STTS was developed around this possibility. By combining digital displays, cloud based content management, multilingual messaging and traffic related analytics, the platform enables traffic infrastructure to serve functions beyond conventional signal operations.

The system is designed to synchronise content with traffic signal phases, displaying messages when signals are red. This approach connects digital communication with existing traffic operations rather than treating it as a separate urban system.

STTS is also one layer of a broader traffic management approach. DPIFS is developing Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) and Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) capabilities that work with existing signal infrastructure rather than replacing it. Each junction can make real time signal decisions locally, while a central command centre supervises the network, monitors conditions and coordinates movement along key corridors.

For Indian cities, where congestion at major junctions is a daily reality, the impact is practical. Adaptive signal timing responds to actual traffic volumes instead of fixed cycles, which can cut idle waiting at junctions, reduce queue spillback and give emergency vehicles a faster path.

INNOVATION MUST WORK BEYOND THE DRAWING BOARD

For infrastructure innovation to create lasting impact, a promising idea must also be practical to deploy, operate and sustain.

Through DPIFS Solutions, he is pursuing implementation models that combine technology, operational management and commercial viability. Build Operate Transfer arrangements and public private partnerships provide a framework for developing projects in collaboration with civic authorities. Digital advertising and technology services offer potential revenue streams to support operations.



DARPAN KALE
Founder and Managing Director of DPIFS Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

This is what makes modernisation more achievable for cities. Revenue from STTS can help offset the cost of upgrading signal control and traffic management, so authorities can modernise in phases, starting with pilot corridors and extending across the network on approval.

Such models require coordination between technology providers, government bodies and commercial stakeholders, making execution and institutional collaboration as important as innovation itself.

Mr. Kale's contributions have earned him the Visionary Leader of the Year 2026 award from AsiaOne Magazine under the Viksit Bharat initiative. By transforming traffic signals into intelligent communication and traffic management platforms, Mr. Kale is contributing to a future where infrastructure goes beyond its conventional purpose, supporting safer mobility, smoother junctions, responsive governance and more citizen focused urban development.