Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

IEW 2026: Energy Data Must Anticipate Growth, Not Chase It, Says Pankaj Jain at IEW 2026

Leadership panel underscores role of granular energy data in shaping resilient economic policy for Viksit Bharat 2047

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 29 JAN 2026 7:32PM by PIB Delhi

Energy must be planned ahead of economic growth, or it risks becoming a binding constraint, said Pankaj Jain, Former Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Member Secretary, Eighth Central Pay Commission, during a Leadership Spotlight Session on the third day of India Energy Week 2026 which is being organised in Goa from 27th Jan to 30th Jan 2026.

Speaking at the session *"Empowering economic policy with energy data: steering India's growth towards Viksit Bharat 2047"* on the Addition Stage, Pankaj Jain stressed the need for forward-looking, data-driven policymaking.

"Energy cannot play catch-up. Energy has to anticipate. If we falter even once in planning energy for GDP growth, it becomes a constraint," he said, highlighting the risks of delayed capacity creation due to fragmented decision-making.

Jain underlined that while India has vast datasets across sectors, energy data remains dispersed across silos. He called for stronger integration of data on petroleum, power, coal and gas to support macroeconomic forecasting, fiscal planning and infrastructure prioritisation. He also noted that accurate energy data is critical not only for capacity planning but also for managing fiscal outcomes, incentives for investment and long-term economic stability.

Srikant Nagulapalli, Director General, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons, emphasised that India's energy needs are set to expand sharply as the country advances towards 2047. He added that hydrocarbons will continue to play a critical role, particularly in hard-to-abate sectors such as fertilisers and refining, even as renewables scale up. Given India's high import dependence and long gestation periods for domestic production, he said that timely, data-backed decisions are essential to ensure energy preparedness and security.

From a market perspective, Vandana Hari, Founder and CEO of Vanda Insights, highlighted the direct linkage between global oil and gas prices and India's macroeconomic indicators. She stressed the importance of scenario-based planning, noting that price volatility makes probabilistic, data-led approaches indispensable for policy planning.

Complementing the discussion, Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman and Managing Director, Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited, highlighted India's rapid expansion in renewable energy and the role of finance in enabling scale. He highlighted the need to align data on intermittency, storage, supply chains and emerging technologies to ensure that the energy transition remains reliable, affordable and investment-ready.

About India Energy Week

India Energy Week is the country's flagship global energy platform, bringing together government leaders, industry executives and innovators to accelerate progress toward a secure, sustainable and affordable energy future. As a neutral international forum, IEW drives investment, policy alignment and technological collaboration shaping the global energy landscape.

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