

Keynote Address by Shri K. Rajaraman, Chairperson, IFSCA

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Good evening, distinguished guests, esteemed colleagues, and friends from Bloomberg.

It is a pleasure to be here today at the Bloomberg Market Outlook Event in the vibrant and ever-evolving ecosystem of GIFT City. I extend my sincere gratitude to the organisers for inviting me to share insights into the transformative journey of GIFT IFSC, particularly in the context of the evolving global financial landscape and the promising outlook for our markets.

Events like this, where insights meet execution, are crucial. They foster dialogue, align vision, and build the momentum necessary for shaping the future of finance.

We gather today at a time of transformation. Across the globe, financial markets are being reimagined and India is increasingly being recognised not just as a destination for capital, but as a **co-architect** of the new global financial order.

Under the **Viksit Bharat @2047** mission, the Government of India has set a goal to achieve the status of a developed and a prosperous country by 2047.

In this journey, GIFT IFSC is not just another reform, it is a **strategic enabler**. It is India's **gateway to global capital**, a **laboratory for financial innovation** and a **beacon of our ambition** to shape the financial architecture of the future.

In the words of our Hon'ble Prime Minister: -

"GIFT City is envisioned to be the Global Nerve Centre of New Age Financial Services."

That is the aspiration.

GIFT IFSC is designed to serve as a preferred "**Gateway**" for global capital flows into India, and to emerge as a "**Regional**" and "**Global Hub**" for various financial services including banking, capital markets, fund management, and insurance etc.

As the regulatory authority for India's IFSCs, IFSCA is committed to fostering a world-class ecosystem that promotes transparency, efficiency, and growth. Our regulatory framework is principle-based and largely aligned with international best practices, drawing insights from other global financial centres. We strive for clear, consistent, and unambiguous policies, laws, and regulations; with tax clarity and certainty being crucial for financial institutions.

Since inception of IFSCA in 2020, in just a few years, the GIFT IFSC has made tremendous progress and has emerged as one of the fastest-growing international financial centres globally.

As we look ahead, the themes of this evening's discussion could not be more timely or relevant. Underlying these themes, let me share a few highlights that showcase the strength and scale we have achieved so far:

- Over **865 regulated entities** now operate from GIFT IFSC across banking, capital markets, insurance, fund management, fintech, and leasing etc.

Banking

- In the banking side, we now have over **30** licensed International Banking Units (IBUs). Collectively, they manage over **USD 88 billion in assets**.
- Our IBUs are increasingly focusing on **global treasury centres, trade finance, and project finance**, with significant expansion in **ECBs** and asset books.
- Our retail deposit base is also growing and have facilitated over **USD 1 billion in NRI savings**.

Capital Markets

- The capital markets at GIFT IFSC are rapidly evolving. The **Listing Regulations**, notified in August 2024, provide a unified regulatory framework for listing securities, aligning with international best practices and facilitating direct listing of Indian companies on international exchanges. This enables Indian businesses and start-ups to directly access foreign capital from GIFT IFSC
- In the debt capital markets, we have seen a strong traction. GIFT IFSC has become a preferred venue for Indian corporates, public sector entities, and financial institutions to list their foreign currency and masala bonds. Over 150 bond issuances by more than 50 issuers have been listed on our exchanges, aggregating close to **USD 65 billion**. FY 2024–25 saw a listing of 57 issuances, raising USD 6.99 billion.
- **Monthly turnover** on IFSC exchanges has now started touching the **\$100Bn** mark.
- In the last one year, **2 credit rating agencies** (one Indian and one global credit rating agency) have setup shop in GIFT IFSC, providing Global Scale ratings; and Indian credit rating agency has also issued **Sovereign Ratings**.

Sustainable Finance

- Importantly, **sustainability** is gaining traction, with over **USD 15.4 billion** out of total issuances in ESG-labelled bonds now listed in GIFT IFSC.
- GIFT IFSC is positioning itself as a **global hub for sustainable finance and climate finance**.

- We have recently issued a framework for **Transition Finance** to support India's ambitious **net-zero goals**, which are estimated to require over USD 10 trillion by 2070.

Fund Management

- **Investment Funds** has been an area where GIFT IFSC has witnessed a robust pace of growth. The Fund Management Regulations that IFSCA notified in April 2022 laid down the foundation of a unified regulatory approach for regulating all types of fund management activities without requiring multiple registrations and approvals from the regulator. These regulations which were modelled around the global best practices ensured that fund managers in IFSC get to enjoy the same regulatory dispensation as is prevalent in global financial centres. Further, the alignment of taxation laws for IFSC funds with those applicable to funds located in foreign jurisdictions, combined with tax incentives and a general lower cost of operations in India, have ensured greater commercial competitiveness of the funds in IFSC.
- Over **160 schemes** have raised **USD 15.7 billion** in commitments. The presence of a thriving ecosystem of FMEs and funds in IFSC today is a testimony of these measures.
- And with the **new Fund Management Regulations** notified earlier this year, we have further simplified requirements, reduced minimum investment thresholds, and enabled greater flexibility for fund structures.
- We are also placing a strategic focus on attracting **long-term patient capital** through **family offices, sovereign wealth funds, pension funds, endowment funds** and **high-net-worth individuals (HNIs)**, both from India and abroad.
- We are also making it easier for **Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)** to participate in the India growth story through setting up of funds in GIFT IFSC for investments via the FPI route.

Leasing

- GIFT IFSC is fast becoming Asia's emerging hub for aircraft and ship leasing. Today, **33 aircraft lessors** and **24 ship lessors** operate from GIFT IFSC, leasing over **242 aviation assets** and **18 vessels**.

Bullion Market

- The **India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX)** has added depth and transparency to the precious metals market.
- The new **IFSCA (Bullion Market) Regulations, 2025** have streamlined operations further, reinforcing compliance, efficiency, and investor protection.

In all of this, our approach is consistent:

Clarity in regulation. Certainty in taxation. Regulatory Agility. And openness to innovation.

Closing Remarks

Ladies and gentlemen,

At a time when global capital flows are being recalibrated due to geo-political uncertainty, and financial centres are being reimagined, GIFT IFSC offers something rare - a unique blend of cost efficiency, innovation, resilience, and policy certainty.

In conclusion, GIFT IFSC represents India's bold vision for the future of global finance. It is not merely about creating a financial hub, but about positioning India as a key player in the international financial landscape. Our continuous efforts in regulatory innovation, coupled with the strong support from the Government of India, are fostering an ecosystem that embraces innovation while ensuring sustainability and resilience

Let me end my address by inviting each of you to **make GIFT IFSC a part of your global strategy**. Not just as a destination, but as a **platform to build, grow, and lead**.

The momentum is real. The future is promising. And the opportunity is now.

Thank you once again to Bloomberg for this platform and to all of you for your presence.

Let us work together to shape the future of financial markets, right here at GIFT IFSC.

Jai Hind!