

Introduction of Dr. Raghuram Rajan, Governor, Reserve Bank of India, by Mr. Bharat Doshi on the occasion of the Twentieth Lalit Doshi Memorial Lecture on 11th August, 2014

Good evening friends,

It is my privilege and honour today to introduce Dr. Raghuram Rajan, Governor, Reserve Bank of India, on the occasion of the annual Lalit Doshi Memorial Lecture, twentieth in the series.

Governor Dr. Rajan I thank you for remembering your commitment last year and agreeing, without a moment's hesitation, to deliver the 20th Lalit Doshi Memorial Lecture, within a year of your taking over as the Governor of RBI.

Sir, we are honoured!

While introducing our distinguished speakers, rather than reading their resume, I prefer to blend their generally known achievements with some lesser known aspects and insights. Some picked up from the internet, some picked during a personal chat we had last month.

When Dr. Raghuram Rajan took charge as Governor of Reserve Bank of India the Rupee was plunging, Current Account Deficit (CAD) at an all-time high and the Indian Economy was facing its worst crisis in over two decades. He arrived like a superman and took several actions which resulted in the Rupee stabilising around 61 within a month's time and storm subsiding.

While taking over he had conveyed that some of the actions he will take will not be popular. He said that the Governorship of the Central Bank is not meant to win one votes or Facebook "Likes" but he hoped to do the right things no matter what the criticism even while looking to learn from the criticism.

Today, Dr. Rajan, an Economist, A Dynamic Thinker, a Central Banker and a Champion of Financial Sector Reforms, is one of the most keenly looked-up to, analysed, commented upon, (even criticised) individual.

Dr. Raghuram Rajan was born in 1963 in the city of Bhopal. He is son of a former distinguished Senior Government Official Mr. R. Govindarajan. Dr. Rajan spent his primary years mostly overseas, living in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Belgium due to his father's postings. After his return to India he attained his B.Tech degree in Electrical Engineering from the IIT, Delhi, in the year 1985. Followed by post-

graduate program in Management from IIM Ahmedabad and received his PhD in Management from the MIT in 1991 for his thesis titled "Essays on Banking".

There is a general feeling that Indians have a tendency to hoard gold. Dr. Rajan is no exception. He secured the Director's Gold Medal for all round performance at IIT, Delhi, and not being satisfied he went ahead and secured the Gold Medal for Academic Performance at IIM, Ahmedabad.

He started his career at Chicago University as an Assistant Professor. In 1996, he was appointed as a visiting professor at Stockholm School of Economics and Kellogg School in North-western University.

Dr. Rajan became the Economic Counsellor and Director of Research (Chief Economist) of the International Monetary Fund in September 2003 — the youngest ever to be appointed to this post.

There is a whole list of awards and prizes which Dr. Rajan has received – So when I met him last month, I asked him which of these awards he covets the most and he immediately responded “the Fischer Black Prize” which he received in the same year when he joined IMF.

The Fischer Black Prize by the American Finance Association, is given every two years to the financial economist under the age 40, for his contribution to the theory and practice of finance. Dr. Rajan was the first recipient of that award in 2003.

Dr. Rajan believes, it is written in many places, that academic and research work should be given great importance and his belief led to his setting up in IMF a strong research wing.

Dr. Rajan attained global recognition for his prediction of the 2008 global financial crisis. During a 2005 conference to honour Alan Greenspan, who was about to retire as chairman of the US Federal Reserve, he delivered a controversial paper that was critical of the financial sector. Titled - Has Financial Development Made The World Riskier? Dr. Rajan "argued that disaster might loom." This 2005 paper shook the entire economic world and there was a sharp negative response.

He is the author of the acclaimed book Fault Lines: How Hidden Fractures Still

Threaten the World Economy, which was awarded the Financial Times-Goldman Sachs prize for best business book of 2010. (Well! Again the word GOLD in Gold man Sachs).

Dr. Rajan Chaired a Government of India Committee on Financial Sector Reforms in 2008. There have been many Committees since then, hence, the topic today covering Achievements, Prospects and Challenges is very relevant. Financial Sector Reforms is a marathon task! However, do you know Dr. Rajan is a marathon runner, a strong swimmer, a competitive squash and tennis player?

Sir, I take the liberty of mentioning one more extra-curricular activity of yours and repeat a quote of yours "I used to play banjo... . . . and I used to be able to do the slow stuff. But when it got fast, I would play randomly and for many years, I got away," Sir, it is very unlikely that there will be any discordant beats or notes in the music you play today!

Sir, earlier I talked about your quote on Facebook 'Likes'. We are all looking forward to your lecture today and I am sure you will get an overwhelming Facebook "Likes" from the fortunate audience present today.
