



Want to make Maharashtra world's largest trading center for diamonds and jewellery: Uddhav Thackeray, Chief Minister of Maharashtra at IIJS Virtual Inauguration

The gem and jewellery industry has once again proved to the world that we are full of our ability to face any adversity and emerge a winner: Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railway

Shri Uddhav Thackeray and Shri Piyush Goyal, addressed at the inaugural ceremony of GJEPC's first ever IIJS Virtual show which commences today

- IIJS VIRTUAL 2020 has 330 exhibitors and 8000 registered buyers including 200 international visitors
- IIJS Virtual will feature a series of seminars on topics related to business in the current scenario

12th October, 2020 Mumbai: The Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India (GJEPC), the apex body for promotion of gems and jewellery, today inaugurated the first ever **India International Jewellery Show, IIJS Virtual 2020, powered by GIA**. GJEPC has organized IIJS for 38 editions, however due to pandemic the physical trade show has been transformed to a complete virtual experience for exhibitors as well as domestic and global visitors. The show will be open for 5 days till October 16, 2020.

The highlight of the inaugural ceremony were **Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railway, Shri Piyush Goyal and Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Uddhav Thackeray were the Guests of honor for the event** and attended the ceremony virtually and addressed the audience.

The IIJS Virtual 2020, has over 330 Exhibitors, 8000 registered Buyers, 2900 meetings have been booked and around 200 visitors registered from the US, UK, UAE, Qatar,

Singapore, Bangladesh, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Italy, Egypt, Belgium, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Czech Republic, Copenhagen etc.

Shri Uddhav Thackeray, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, said, "GJEPC has adapted well to the changing lifestyle. We all have to face ups and down in life, but we should continue living. If it was a normal period, we would have celebrated IJS as a festival together by meeting in person. Whenever we talk about jewellery and diamonds, we are reminded of the auspicious occasions in life. All of life's milestones are celebrated with diamonds and jewellery."

"In India, as we say "unity in diversity", from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, there are numerous states, different languages, different traditions. Every state has a unique jewellery tradition in our country. Jewellery is part of Indian culture and I'm proud of it."

"We are experts in diamonds. Diamond is just a stone, but when it is cut and polished it gets a unique sparkle. Analysing and understanding a diamond is not an easy thing, it requires special skills which we Indians have. Jewellery designing, trading and other aspects of the business are required, which has taken this industry to greater heights."

"We want to make Maharashtra the number one trading centre for diamonds and jewellery not only in India, but the world. I'm inviting the industry to be more interactive so that we can accomplish this vision together. The Government of Maharashtra will do everything to take the jewellery trade to greater heights. We should also think about how to further enhance our designing institutes to develop them further."

"We are already in the process of making a Jewellery Park in Mumbai. If the industry needs any help from the Maharashtra Government, we are ready to support it. But anything that we do, should provide employment for the people of Maharashtra."

"Today, we are going to showcase our jewellery tradition to the whole world virtually. I congratulate GJEPC in leading the way. When you embrace change, that's when you make progress."

"For the development and progress of our country, I welcome you all and I wish all of you the very best. Let's work together, to make the Indian gem and jewellery sector the number one in the world."

Addressing at the inaugural ceremony, **Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railways**, said, "I am indeed proud of the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), who have shown resilience in these testing times when the

world is suffering the adverse effects of the pandemic, to showcase intrinsically and beautifully created pieces of art through the medium of technology.”

“In fact, this imbibing of technology to reach out to customers across the world shows the resilience of Indian business, Indian industry, and the commitment to serve customers, particularly with the festival season around the corner, both in India as we celebrate Navratri, Dussera and Diwali; and across the world, where Christmas and the New Year are going to be times when we erupt in joy and bring back the mood in the world. I am also delighted that the best of technology is being used, and that we have been able to make this whole virtual experience so real that it almost feels like we are touching that piece of jewellery in the virtual exhibition.”

“There’s a famous proverb: “A gem cannot be polished without friction, nor a man perfected without trials.” I think the gem and jewellery industry has once again proved to the world that we are full of our ability to face any adversity and emerge a winner, and in every trial, India will demonstrate to the world that we are a trusted partner, a trusted supplier, someone that you can engage with and enjoy the benefits and fruits of the spirit of success and fighting adversity that every Indian businessman is intrinsically born with”,
Hon’ble Minister

Colin Shah, Chairman of GJEPC in his opening remarks said, “ The show has been receiving overwhelming response from exhibiting companies and buyers alike. I am confident and optimistic that IIJS Virtual will bring the much needed momentum in the Gems & Jewellery business ahead of festive season.

The gem & jewellery industry is actively operational with Surat Diamond factories running at 90% capacity GJEPC is constantly pursuing with the government for reforms such as E Commerce, Gold Monetisation, SEZ policy, sales at SNZ etc requisite to propel growth in the trade .

I sincerely acknowledge the support and guidance of Ministry of Commerce , Finance Ministry, and Maharashtra State Govt, who have backed us with timely policy notifications that helped the industry in these challenging times to bring it back on track.”

There are demands from the US, Hong Kong and Middle East, Asian Countries. Slowly and gradually, the industry is gaining momentum to revive exports to the pre covid level. Our Virtual platforms have been well appreciated by buyers and exhibitors alike.” Colin Shah added

Vipul Shah, Vice Chairman, GJEPC, said, “Collectively, the gem and jewellery industry has shown resilience, adapted well to the situation, and is making optimum use of digital means to deal with day to day business. Overall, the industry has been quick to adapt to the new normal. IIJS Virtual, is an effort to build a robust digital architecture that showcases India’s leading manufacturers and connects them to the buyers from India and world. I am confident that the show will be a pivot in driving the business, trade and exports for the sector.”

Shailesh Sangani, Convener, IIJS Virtual, said, “This is a new chapter and a new beginning in the history of GJEPC, with a mega show like IIJS is being organised virtually for the first time ever.

With the use of latest technology, the platform is seamlessly integrated with physical aspects. It has well-equipped digital architecture and facilitates one-on-one meetings between sellers and buyers. Both the buyer and exhibitor experience are enhanced with 2D and 3D Stalls, Dashboards, and an appealing Meeting Interface with live product profiling.”

Sriram Natarajan, Managing Director, GIA India said, “I would like to thank GJEPC for bringing us together in this one of a kind IIJS Virtual 2020. GIA’s association with GJEPC goes back many years. This year we are privileged to be part of IIJS in its new virtual avatar.”

The five-day virtual show will host a series of seminars featuring the industry’s best professionals, who will speak on a range of topics of vital importance to your business in the current scenario including, outlook 2021 Gold, Diamond, & Platinum; Virtual Transformation of Retail In times of Pandemic; Design Direction 2021; Export Opportunities in Silver; Digital transformation; Faceless Assessment.

IIJS Virtual held a Welcome Evening on 11th October, a day prior to the start of the five-day show. Chetan Bhagat, who has inspired a generation of youth through his best-selling novels and motivational speeches, was the star of the evening. Colin Shah engaged Bhagat in a conversation, while acknowledging the industry’s joint effort against covid.

About The Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC)

The Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), set up by the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India (GoI) in 1966, is one of several Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) launched by the Indian Government, to boost the country’s export thrust, when India’s post-Independence economy began making forays in the international markets. Since 1998, the GJEPC has been granted autonomous status. The GJEPC is the apex body of gems & jewellery industry and today represents 7000 exporters in the sector. With headquarters in Mumbai, GJEPC has Regional Offices in New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Surat

and Jaipur, all of which are major centres for the industry. It thus has a wide reach and is able to have a closer interaction with members to serve them in a direct and more meaningful manner. Over the past decades, GJEPC has emerged as one of the most active EPCs, and has continuously strived to both expand its reach and depth in its promotional activities as well as widen and increase services to its members.