

GEMS & JEWELLERY TIMES

**'India can be jeweller
to the world'**

Interview with
Somasundaram P R

**Here comes
the bride**

Trends that will rule
the bridal season

**The maestro
of design**

Anand Shah shares
his thoughts on design
and inspirations

Crafting the next

A case for jewellery hubs and
technology-led innovations in
design and manufacturing





*An Integration of
Promising
Jewellers in
India*



All India Gems & Jewellery Trade Federation

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Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400 093. ☎ +91 22 6738 2727 | www.gjf.in



Today, I have the proud privilege of being Chairman of the GJF, a role that has enriched my life and continues to motivate me to give my best to our glorious industry. I have been handed the responsibility of heading this prestigious organisation at a time when the market is witnessing a slowdown and I would like to tell my colleagues not to lose hope since we see light at the end of the tunnel.

The GJF has initiated interactions with the government and business forums on the concerns and needs of the gems and jewellery industry. It has had intensive meetings with the Finance Minister and the Commerce Minister, besides senior officials of both ministries as well as the Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxation. Many of our demands on the PAN card issue and import restrictions on gold have also been considered by the government and now we are taking efforts to make the Gold Monetization Scheme more effective with industry participation.

The GJF will hold four Regional Round Table Conferences to improve understanding on industry issues and then address them on the basis of conclusions reached at these conferences. Going forward, we will also prepare a vision document listing our concerns and a positive roadmap for the future.

The establishment of a national council for the gems and jewellery industry has been my long-cherished ambition, which I now share with my colleagues at the GJF. We are relentlessly pursuing this goal and soon we will achieve this milestone as well.

We intend to conduct polls for electing a new Committee of Administration by the general body of members around the end of this year, which will be done in a transparent manner and with active participation of members.

I would also like to put in more effort towards creating a conducive and dynamic environment for the members. In the past year, we launched several initiatives for creating meaningful communication and building stronger bonds amongst members. We have a new membership fee structure as recommended and approved by the COA, which will be put up at the annual general meeting for approval. Membership has to be clearly classified under heads; so please complete the classification process and vote effectively.

The PMI has always been one of our success stories and recently, the third phase was successfully launched. The National Jewellery Awards was given a new flair, with ten students receiving scholarships of Rs 1.5 lakh from the GJF. Star Scheme, a skill development programme that the GJF is executing in cooperation with the GJSCI under the auspices of the Government of India, has in 16 weeks since its initiation covered 91 centres and more than 2,014 trainees. Under the Fellowship Programme a trip was organised for members to the Las Vegas Show in the first quarter of 2015. Abhusanam, the regional B2B meets, have been successfully held at Raipur and Nagpur. Jewellers ID card was successfully launched during the grand finale of the National Jewellery Awards and Abham, the educational initiative that seeks to improve business and efficiency of jewellers, will be rolled out again.

My aim as Chairman for the period until the elections is to ensure thorough professionalism in improving our services, creating more value for our members and clearing all compliance issues. It is a matter of personal satisfaction that the GJF has moved to a more comfortable and well-appointed office space and we have more branches in Kolkata, Raipur, Nagpur, Chennai and New Delhi. Revised standard operating procedures will soon be put into place in order to create a professional environment with highest ethics and integrity. Internal audit processes have been initiated to ensure high transparency and accountability in our work practices. Communication systems are being re-looked at extensively with the GJF website being reworked completely. The GJF magazine, the voice of the industry, is an ambitious exercise taken up by us to represent our concerns, our successes and challenges.

There is a lot of good work that I look forward to as I steer the organisation that I am so proud of. I thank our valued members, the members of the Committee of Administration and my team at GJF for sharing my vision for the industry and for their constant support. I look forward to the same in the future.

G V Sreedhar

Chairman

All India Gems & Jewellery Trade Federation (GJF)

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आज, मुझे इस बात का गर्व है कि जीजेएफ का चेयरमैन होने का अवसर मिला, यह एक ऐसी भूमिका है जिसने मेरे जीवन को समृद्धवान कर दिया है और इस बात के लिए लगातार प्रेरित किया कि जेम्स एण्ड ज्वैलरी उद्योग के लिए जितना बेहतर हो सके काम करूं। मैं अपने आपको काफी सम्मानित महसूस कर रहा हूँ कि मुझे एक प्रतिष्ठित संगठन के नेतृत्व का भार सौंपा गया है। वह भी ऐसे समय में जबकि पूरा बाजार मंदी के दौर से गुजर रहा है। इसके लिए मैं इस उद्योग के अपने साथियों से कहना चाहूंगा कि वे हिम्मत नहीं हारें क्योंकि आशा की एक चमकीली और स्पष्ट छवि इस मंदी की दूसरी तरफ साफ नजर आ रही है

जीजेएफ ने इस मंदी के मामले में सरकार और वाणिज्यिक संगठनों से वार्ताएं कर जेम्स एण्ड ज्वैलरी उद्योग की आवश्यकताओं के बारे में जानकारी दी है। जिनमें वित्त मंत्री, वाणिज्य मंत्री तथा वाणिज्य एवं वित्त मंत्रालय के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों, केन्द्रीय प्रत्यक्ष कर बोर्ड के अध्यक्ष इत्यादि के साथ कई बैठकें की हैं। इनमें से हमारी कुछ मांगें सरकार ने पूरी की हैं जैसे कि पैन कार्ड तथा स्वर्ण आयात से प्रतिबंध का हटाना इनमें सबसे महत्वपूर्ण है। हमारा लगातार यही प्रयास रहेगा कि स्वर्ण नियंत्रण को अधिक प्रभावशाली तरीके तथा उद्योग की भागीदारी में लागू किया जाए।

जीजेएफ क्षेत्रीय स्तर पर चार क्षेत्रों में गोल मेज सम्मेलन (आरटीसी) आयोजित किए इस उद्योग के मसलों को समझ बना कर मैं सुधार किया जाए जो कि इस कॉन्फ्रेंस से निकल कर सामने आए हैं। इसके साथ ही हम एक विजन डॉक्यूमेंट भी तैयार किया है जिसमें हमारी चिंताओं तथा भविष्य के लिए सकारात्मक रोड मैप होगा जिसे उद्योग और सरकार के साथ साझा किया जाएगा।

नेशनल कौंसिल फॉर द जेम्स एण्ड ज्वैलरी इण्डस्ट्री की स्थापना की महत्वाकांक्षा मेरे मन में काफी समय से है, जिसे मैं जीजेएफ में अपने साथियों के साथ साझा करना चाहूंगा। हम इस लक्ष्य के लिए अथक प्रयास कर रहे हैं और जब भी इस लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करेंगे यह हम सभी के लिए एक बँचमार्क साबित होगा। हमारा प्रयास है कि नई प्रशासनिक समिति के लिए साधारण सभा के सदस्यों द्वारा इस वर्ष के अंत तक चुनाव करा लिए जाएं जो कि बिलकुल पारदर्शी तरीके से हों और उसमें सदस्यों की सक्रिय भागीदारी भी रहे।

मैं हमेशा यही चाहता हूँ कि अधिकाधिक ऐसे प्रयास करूं जो हमारे सदस्यों के लिए अनुकूल एवं गतिशील वातावरण तैयार कर सकें, पिछले वर्ष हमने अपने सदस्यों के साथ सुदृढ़ सम्पर्क बनाने के लिए कई पहल की, हमने जमीनी स्तर पर उनकी चिंताओं की जानकारी ली और हम सभी के बीच सार्थक संचार के अवसर तैयार किए। हमारे पास सदस्यता शुल्क नया स्ट्रक्चर है जिसे सीओए ने अपनी सिफारिश के साथ मंजूरी दे दी है और इसे वार्षिक साधारण सभा (एजीएम) के समक्ष जनरल बॉडी द्वारा पेश किया जाएगा। इस सदस्यता का स्पष्ट वर्गीकरण उस पैल के अनुरूप किया गया है जिससे वे सम्बन्ध रखते हों। यदि आपने अपना वर्गीकरण प्रक्रिया को पूरा कर लिया है तो आप प्रभावी तरीके से मतदान कर सकते हैं।

पीएमआई हमेशा हमारी सफलता की एक कहानी रही है। पीएमआई के तीसरे चरण को सफलता पूर्वक विशाल पैमाने पर लांच किया जा चुका है नेशनल ज्वैलरी अवॉर्ड्स ने एक नई सुरुचि प्रदान की है, पहली बार 10 विद्यार्थियों को उच्च शिक्षा के लिए जीजेएफ द्वारा 1.5 लाख रुपए की छात्रवृत्ति प्रदान की गई है। स्टार स्क्रीम एक कौशल विकास कार्यक्रम है जिसे जीजेएफ जीजेएससीआई के सहयोग से भारत सरकार की छत्रछाया में आयोजित कर रहा है और इसने अपने शुरु होने के पहले 16 सप्ताहों में भारत के 91 केंद्रों से 2,014 प्रशिक्षुओं को प्रशिक्षण प्रदान किया है। अण्डर फेलोशिप प्रोग्राम के तहत वर्ष 2015 की पहली तिमाही में इसके सदस्यों के लिए लासवेगास शो लिए दौरा आयोजित किया गया। आभूषण यह क्षेत्रीय स्तर पर बी2बी बायर सेलर मीट थी जिसे कि अक्टूबर 2015 में क्रमशः रायपुर और नागपुर में आयोजित किया गया। ज्वैलर्स पहचान पत्र फरवरी 2015 में नेशनल ज्वैलरी अवॉर्ड के फाइनल के दौरान इसे सफलता पूर्वक लांच किए गए और लाभम् एक शैक्षणिक पहल है जिससे बिजनेस मॉडल में सुधार के साथ ही ज्वैलरी कारोबार अधिक मिनट स्तर काम करने की क्षमता हो।

चुनाव होने तक की अल्प अवधि के लिए मुझे यह अध्यक्ष पद की जिम्मेदारी सौंपी गई है तथापि मेरा लक्ष्य

अपनी व्यावसायिकता और प्रयासों के आधार पर हमारी सेवाओं में और सुधार तथा हमारे सदस्यों का मान और बढ़ाने तथा जटिल मसलों को हल करने का पूरा प्रयास करूंगा। यह आत्मसंतुष्टि का मामला है कि जीजेएफ और अधिक सुविधाजनक और सुसज्जित कार्यालय कोलकाता, रायपुर, नागपुर, चेन्नई और नई दिल्ली में है। इसके साथ ही मेरा प्रयास रहेगा कि संशोधित स्टेण्डर्ड ऑपरटिंग प्रोसिजर (एसओपी) को शीघ्र ही लागू किया जाए ताकि उच्चतम नीति और सत्यनिष्ठा के साथ ही एक व्यावसायिक वातावरण बन सके। इसी प्रकार आंतरिक अंकेक्षण हमारे कार्य स्थल पर उच्च पारदर्शिता एवं जवाबदेही के लिए है अतः इस प्रक्रिया को लागू किया गया। कम्प्यूटेशन सिस्टम को विशाल पैमाने पर फिर से देखा जा रहा है जिसमें जीजेएफ की वेबसाइट को पूर्णतः नवीनीकृत किया जा रहा है। जीजेएफ मैगजीन इस उद्योग की आवाज को उठाना एक महत्वाकांक्षी अभ्यास है जिसे हमने अपने हाथों में लिया है ताकि हम अपनी चिंताओं को साझा कर सकें साथ ही साथ अपनी सफलता एवं चुनौतियों को भी एक दूसरे को बता सकें।

जीजेएफ के अध्यक्ष पद का कार्यभार संभालने के साथ बहुत से मुझे अच्छे काम और कदम उठाने हैं, यह एक ऐसा संगठन है जिसका एक अभिन्न अंग बनते हुए मुझे गर्व हो रहा है। मैं अपने सभी सदस्य, प्रशासनिक कमेटी के सदस्यों और मेरी जीजेएफ की समर्पित टीम को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ जिन्होंने मेरी दृष्टिकोण को इस संगठन और उद्योग के योग्य समझा, भविष्य में भी इसी प्रकार के सहयोग और समर्थन की आशा करता हूँ।

जी वी श्रीधर

चेयरमैन

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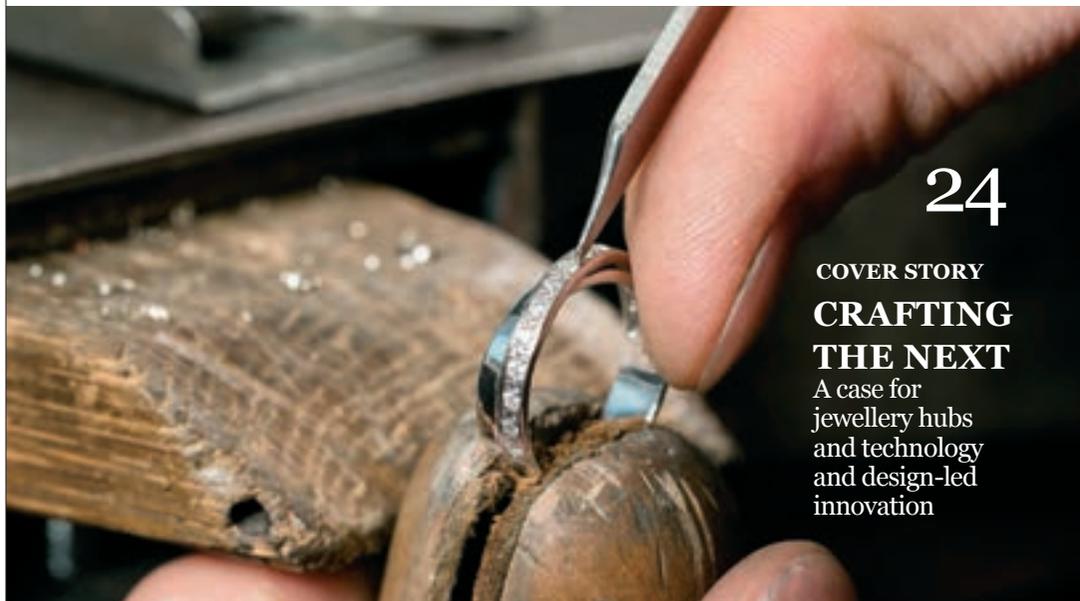
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GJF INTERACTIVE SEMINAR ON TDS WITH INCOME TAX OFFICIALS

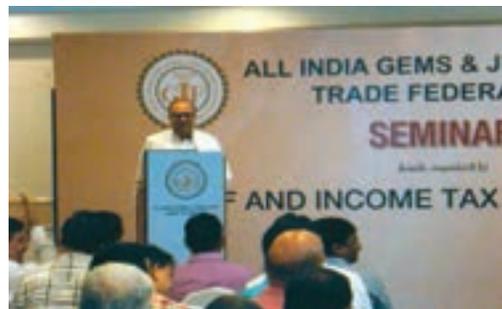
The All India Gems and Jewellery Trade Federation (GJF), the country's leading national trade body of gems and jewellery, in association with Income Tax officials, organised a TDS (Tax Deduction at Source) compliance educational programme for its members in Mumbai on October 1.

In his opening address, Ashok Minawala, Director, GJF, said, "This event is an extension of our Labham programme and seeks to provide the basic knowledge of filing TDS returns. The key issue for our members is to keep up with the changing needs of tax compliances in a transparent manner."

Dr Darsi Suman Ratnam, Joint Commissioner, Income Tax (TDS), Mumbai, said, "The gems and jewellery trade need to be organised and sincere in regular filing of TDS since the income tax compliance



Participants exchange views and seek clarifications at the seminar



GJF Director Ashok Minawala addressing the seminar process is changing very fast in order to bring transparency into the system."

The government is expected to introduce an advanced software application for tax payers to gather income-related information from various sources such as banks, Customs, and so on.

This unique programme was organised considering the needs of jewellers, manufacturers, traders and other constituents of the gems and jewellery businesses in

ling their TDS obligations. The participants interacted with IT officials and sought various clarifications that are essential elements of conducting business and adhering to the regulatory and taxation norms prevailing in the industry. The objective was to help improve governance, credibility and ease of operations for small and micro businesses.

ASSOCHAM SEEKS INDUSTRY STATUS FOR GEMS AND JEWELLERY SECTOR

The government should give industry status to gems and jewellery to give it the much needed boost since the sector has great potential to create new jobs and contribute to the economy through exports, industry body Assocham has said. The suggestion was made in the study "Gems and Jewellery: Contributing to Make in India" conducted jointly by Assocham and Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI).

Assocham's National General Secretary D S Rawat said the sector is going through a rough phase and needs the government's attention. Overall exports from gems and jewellery sector in India during the first six months of 2015-16 stood at USD 19.22 billion, which shows a decline of 5.59 per cent over the USD 20.3 billion exported in the same period last year. "This sector may register an overall decline of 15 per cent due to global economic downturn," said Rawat.

"Granting industry status can give a fillip to investments and bring down costs of operation in this sector. It will also help build trust and faith in Indian brands in the global markets. We also urge the government to create a separate ministry or department for this sector," he added.

As per the study, Indian gems and jewellery industry is one of the largest in the world with a share of 29 per cent in global jewellery consumption. India exported gold jewellery worth USD 8 billion in 2013-14 and is expected to reach USD 40 billion by 2020 as per the World Gold Council, stated the study. It also pointed out that young workers are shunning this sector and moving to other lucrative industries in the manufacturing sector since it is the least paying. "The average salary at ₹2.52 lakh per annum is perhaps the lowest amid manufacturing industries like pharma (₹5.09 lakh), capital goods (₹4.49 lakh), chemical (₹3.97 lakh), automotive (₹3.77 lakh), metal and metal products (₹2.52 lakh)," it added.

GHB'S JEWELLERY PARK SET FOR REVIVAL

The Gujarat Hira Bourse (GHB)'s Gems and Jewellery Park located at Ichhapore is all set to regain its lost glitter. The park is also likely to win the government nod for Special Notified Zone (SNZ) for rough diamonds. Expectedly, it will then become the hub of jewellery and diamond manufacturing as well as rough diamond distribution by big mining companies.

Spread over 100 hectares, the park earlier comprised Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and Domestic Tariff Area (DTA). Recently, the union government denotified the park's SEZ status and GHB office-bearers are now confident that new jewellery and diamond manufacturing units will be set up in the park in the coming months. Around 300-plus stakeholders from the industry had purchased plots in it in 2005.

Approximately seven units, including diamond and jewellery manufacturing, diamond technology and IT and more have been operational in the Domestic Tariff Area since the past one-and-a-half years. Another four to five jewellery units are likely to start operations after Diwali. The construction of ten other units is going on in full swing.

GHB officials have been receiving many enquiries from jewellery manufacturers from Surat and Mumbai for setting up units after the government denotified the SEZ status. The GHB in 2013 had requested the union government to denotify it as SEZ because of procedural issues and hurdles. In February, the Gujarat government gave a no-objection to the denotification.

GEMS AND JEWELLERY CENTRE IN MEERUT

In a bid to boost exports and trade in precious stones and metals, the Uttar Pradesh government is setting up a gems and jewellery centre in Meerut. The centre is being set up at an investment of over ₹5.26 crore, under the Assistance to States for Development of Export Infrastructure and Allied Activities (ASIDE) scheme of the central government. Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary Alok Ranjan has directed officials to speed up work on the project, so that the gems and jewellery centre is ready for inauguration in the first week of April 2016. Under the ASIDE scheme, 118 projects have so far been approved in the state. Currently, 28 projects are in the process of completion.

GSI BREAKS NEW GROUND IN BULK STAR AND MELEE TESTING

Gemological Science International, (GSI), one of the world's leading gemmological labs, has become the first and the only laboratory in India to begin batch testing for star and melee-sized diamonds using state-of-the-art technology. It will offer cost-effective testing by utilising a powerful and robust mid-IR spectrometer used for routine and advanced laboratory analysis. This service now available in Surat will soon expand to GSI offices in Mumbai. "The infiltration of synthetics into the melee trade has become a legitimate concern to the industry. This testing method may be the long-awaited solution to the time-consuming method of testing used till now," said GSI CEO Mark Gershburg.



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SOLITAIRE CUSTOMERS ON THE RISE

A new segment of consumers living in tier-II cities and their suburbs and earning well are the newest customers of solitaires. In jewellery parlance, the word solitaire is used to describe a single diamond or gemstone set in a jewel piece.

The age group of this new set of buyers is between 40 and 50 years. They earn well and aspire to buy solitaires to celebrate their marriage anniversaries or birthdays. In the last two months, the sale of solitaires has increased by 20-30 per cent in comparison to last year.

Cities such as Bhopal, Coimbatore, Nagpur, Lucknow, Guwahati and Cuttack have many such buyers. "Even people living in the suburbs of Mumbai have developed a taste for solitaires," said a jeweller. Even as aspirational levels have gone up on the one hand, prices of diamonds have also eased by 10-15 per cent and given a fillip to demand. Diamond prices have dropped because global demand has not picked up.

"Even youngsters are buying solitaires. We have seen a growth of 20 per cent in the last two months. Some movement has also been noticed in the medium and small diamond category," another jeweller added.

In the solitaire category the demand is more for diamonds in the one-three carats range. The price of solitaires depends on quality, colour and size.

ASEAN FTA TO REMAIN UNTOUCHED FOR NOW

India is unlikely to tinker with its free trade agreement (FTA) with the ten-member ASEAN to curb the sharp increase in import of gold jewellery from the region, particularly Indonesia.

The Commerce Ministry, which has been alerted by the revenue department about the sudden spurt in gold jewellery imports at preferential duties through the FTA route, wants strong steps to curb misuse of the treaty rather than to change its provisions. "An FTA is an agreement between two sovereign governments and its terms cannot be changed at the drop of a hat. The only way to control the deluge is by ensuring that exporters are not flouting the prescribed value-added and rules of origin norms and allowing third-country gold to come in," a government official said. Under the Indo-ASEAN free trade agreement in goods, gold jewellery can be imported at a preferential duty of two per cent (against 15 per cent from other countries), while the import duty on gold is 10 per cent. But the value added to local gold and imported gold while making jewellery has to compulsorily be 20 per cent and 35 per cent respectively.

"It is very difficult to value-add 35 per cent to gold, as it is a high-value metal. We are apprehensive that Indonesia may be flouting rules of origin norms by using gold from third countries such as Dubai, without adding the required value," the official said.

New Delhi suspects that Indonesian jewellers may be importing gold scrap from third countries and determining the value added by including costs for mining, refining and finally converting these into jewellery, while the actual value added should just be the jewellery-making cost. "Even if gold scrap is being imported by ASEAN countries from third countries it has to be treated as foreign gold. By refining the gold, one cannot say that it originated in one's country. We need to follow this up rigorously with Indonesia and also ensure that the vigilance procedure at our own ports is tight," the official added.



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ADVERTISING SHARE OF JEWELLERY HIGH IN VARIOUS MEDIA

Personal accessories is a diverse category comprising sub-categories such as jewellery, footwear, lifestyle, luggage, watches and more and over the past five years has contributed around 1.8 per cent of insertion volumes in TV, print and radio. Within personal accessories, jewellery has an advertising share of 64.6 per cent in TV, 87.5 per cent in radio and 66.3 per cent in print — making it the most important category for analysis. According to exchange4media.com and Strategy Group, the analytical arm of TAM Media Research, in print, the category which was growing at 24 per cent in 2012, decreased in 2013 and 2014. Similarly on TV, the category which was growing in 2012 and 2013, saw a 14 per cent drop in 2014.

October/November seems to be the most inventory-heavy months for the category on TV as well as in print showing spikes across the past five years. April/May also contribute heavily for the TV medium. Gitanjali Gems Ltd as an advertiser is responsible for around 30 per cent of the overall print advertising volume for jewellery. Most of the players are region-specific when it comes to print advertising. For example, Joyalukkas & Sons is South focused, Swarg Jewellers majorly focuses its print advertising in the West, whereas Anjali Jewellers concentrates in the East. Top players like Gitanjali Gems Ltd and Titan Company Ltd have targeted their print communication in multiple zones. Around 50 per cent of TV advertising for this category comes from the top six players — Kalyan Jewellers, Joyalukkas Group, Gitanjali Gems Ltd, Josco Jewellers, Malabar Group of Companies and Titan Company Ltd. Just like print, TV also experiences region-specific advertising.



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GUINNESS WORLD RECORD HOLDER 'PEACOCK RING' UNVEILED

Savio Jewellery recently unveiled its Peacock Ring, a Guinness World Record holder. The ring, a glorious tribute to India's national bird, has been crafted in 18k white gold with 3827 VVS-EF quality diamonds mounted on it. Designed in the shape of a peacock

spreading its feathers, it was conceptualised and designed by Abhishek Sand and Ashish Sand, the ace designers of Savio Jewellery.

The ring was made with four different orthographic views so that none of the detailing was missed. It has gone on to become the Guinness World Record holder for the most diamonds set in one ring. The ring weighs 50.42 grams and diamonds used in it have a combined carat weight of 16.5.

"It all began when we came across a ring with the largest number of diamonds set in it in a magazine. Then came the adrenaline rush and the rest is history," said Abhishek Sand. Despite all odds and challenges, Savio Jewellery achieved its goal in three years' time. "It indeed has been a long journey with me, my brother and our parents dreaming of something, following it with passion and persistence and finally achieving it," said Ashish Sand. Savio Jewellery, which has already won six awards in different categories, continues to create history with designs have a timeless appeal.



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JEWELLERY ON RENT

The trend of taking jewellery on rent is growing. Rather than buying expensive jewellery that is likely to adorn the bank locker more than an individual, consumers today can rent ornaments of their choice at a fraction of the cost. They can also be free from safekeeping responsibilities. Young women are therefore increasingly opting for costume jewellery than traditional gold jewellery, preferring *polki*, *kundan*, crystal and semi-precious stones that complement both traditional and Indo-Western garments.

Jewellery-on-rent for both real and imitation jewels are provided by Eves24.com, Rentjewels.com and others. The idea for Eves24.com

germinated when its founder heard his aunt lament about having to repeat her emerald and pearl jewellery twice in two weeks. Eves24.com has a ₹5-lakh membership plan, at an annual fee of ₹25,000 — to be paid from the second year of membership onwards — that allows subscribers to borrow jewellery worth ₹5 lakh in a year.

Jewellery can be rented for a period of three to seven days at a fee of around five-seven per cent of its value. For ornaments costing ₹4 lakh one has to shell out ₹20,000 if kept for three days and ₹28,000 for seven days. Even if a woman borrows one set of jewellery for each function, assuming there are five functions, she will have to shell out between ₹1 lakh and ₹1.50 lakh — less than half the cost of buying even a single jewellery set! There is a security deposit as well. The security money could be a turn-off for those not looking to invest such a sum in a bank fixed deposit, but players say that members can earn an interest of around eight per cent on the deposit. Eves24.com offers hallmarked and certified diamond and studded jewellery in gold and platinum, Rentjewels.com specialises in costume jewellery.

(News compilation courtesy: Ad Factors and www.diamonds.net)

INDIAN CONSUMERS NEED DIFFERENTIATED STRATEGIES

According to De Beers, diamond retailers will be required to adopt differentiated approaches to realise the significant growth opportunity in India, the world's third-biggest consumer market for diamonds in which demand has more than trebled over the last decade.

Rising incomes and aspirations could afford the industry an even bigger prize over the next 10 years, the company said in a note based on a 2014 survey of 40,000 Indian women, probably the largest consumer study of its kind ever conducted in India. To realise this potential, the stakeholders will need to be proactive in opening up opportunities, according to the Diamond Insight Report 2015.

India's domestic diamond consumer market has achieved almost uninterrupted growth over the last two decades, with demand expanding in 19 of the last 20 years in rupee terms. About 2.5 million pieces of diamond jewellery were bought in 2013, roughly six times the number acquired in 2002. With an eight per cent share of global demand (measured in polished wholesale value in USD) in 2014, India is placed third behind the USA and China.



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DE BEERS HIGHLIGHTS INDIA AS THE COUNTER TO FLAT GROWTH

According to the De Beers Group of Companies' Diamond Insight Report 2015, the industry's biggest opportunity is in India with its burgeoning economy and emerging middle class.

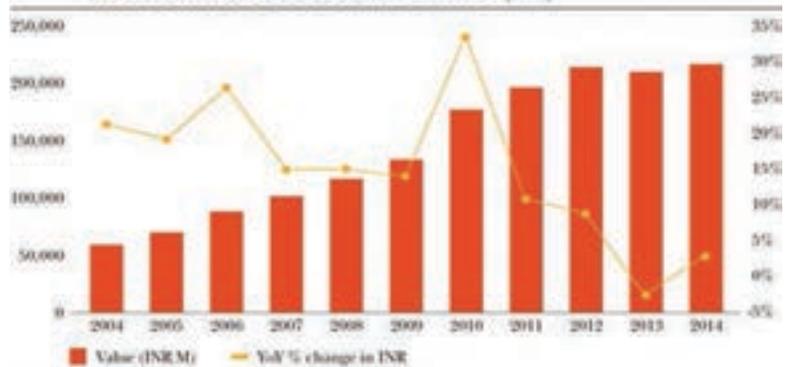
India's diamond consumer market has achieved almost uninterrupted growth over the last 20 years and is now one of the world's largest consumer markets, the report said. At the same time, retail behaviour is changing as chains are set to grow in significance and lead the way in online development, both as a sales channel and as a means of researching future purchases.

Diamond demand grew in all five of the top consuming markets — US, China, Japan, India and the Gulf Cooperation Council nations which account for 75 per cent of global purchases, according to the report. Elsewhere, growth was stymied by a strong dollar.

It said that world demand for diamond jewellery rose three per cent to more than \$80 billion for the first time in 2014 as global rough diamond production rose six per cent to \$19 billion. Still, despite 2014's performance, the continued strength of the dollar and lower demand in China is likely to see little further global growth — in US dollar terms — in 2015, the company said.

In July, the miner cut its full-year production goal to 29 million to 31 million carats from a previous range of 30 million to 32 million carats. That was down from as much as 34 million carats at the start of the year.

INDIA DIAMOND JEWELLERY DEMAND (INR)



Source: De Beers

TARA JEWELS' EXCLUSIVE AGREEMENT WITH STERLING JEWELERS

India's Tara Jewels signed an exclusive manufacturing and supply deal with Sterling Jewelers Inc., a part of Signet Group, for the designer brand Angel Sanchez. The brand's offerings have been assigned an initial value of more than \$4.4 million, including designs that are being preliminarily tested in about 60 stores.

Sterling Jewelers Inc. has approximately 1,400 stores in the US. Tara Jewels designs and manufactures jewellery in its three manufacturing facilities, besides having retail operations in India.

BANGKOK GEMS AND JEWELRY FAIR A GLITTERING SUCCESS

The 56th Bangkok Gems and Jewelry Fair held on September 10-14 at the IMPACT Exhibition Centre in the Thai capital showcased the country as a jewellery manufacturing hub. Inaugurated by Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, the theme of the fair was 'Thailand: The AEC Gems & Jewelry Capital', highlighting how jewellery manufacturing and sales could benefit Thailand's economy.

The latest iteration of the event also marked the first time that a Duty Free scheme was introduced to cover all items and products at the fair. The debut of the Duty Free scheme was to encourage more international traders and buyers to attend the event, a goal that was met with resounding success.

India was well-represented at the fair, with traders and jewellery manufacturers from around the country landing at the Thai capital to showcase their products.

The fair was organised by the Gems, Jewelry and Precious Metal Confederation of Thailand (GJPCT), along with the Thai Gem and Jewelry Traders Association and the Ministry of Commerce's Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP). The President of the GJPCT, Somchai Phornchindarak, oversaw the fair's first ever Gems, Jewelry and Luxury Goods auction, where potential buyers bid on 120 select pieces, including a stunning 15ct. Burmese blue sapphire, mounted in 18k white gold.

The success of the auction was highlighted by Mr. Somchai's comments on it becoming a regular event at future fairs. With Thailand looking to position itself once again as a major player in the Asian gems and jewellery precinct, it is quite plausible that this sector will play a big role in future Indo-Thai trade relations.



INDIAN JEWELLERY GAINS POPULARITY IN PAKISTAN

Indian jewellery brands are continuing their foray into Pakistan's market, spurred on by the favour shown by Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) in conducting more trade and business with India. Senior KCCI official Zubair Motiwala said it was a good sign that private entrepreneurs in Pakistan are keen on introducing Indian brands in the Pakistani market.

After the successful launch of leading jewellery brands in the neighbouring country, Indian designer jewellery which have a star-studded clientele are also witnessing a growth in demand in Karachi.

Indian brands have established a great reputation worldwide and are favoured by Pakistani clientele. Designer brands are selling at the affordable price range of ₹4,000-30,000. The collections currently include statement necklaces, headgear, earrings and hand harnesses. They are a blend of Eastern and Western designs and can be worn with all kinds of outfits.

(News compilation courtesy: Ad Factors and www.diamonds.net)

LAB-GROWN DIAMONDS TO FILL DEFICIT OF MINED ONES

According to a report from Better Diamond Initiative, technological developments in the production of grown diamonds embody a significant opportunity as researchers predict demand will double in the next ten years. Advances in the chemical vapour deposition (CVD) technology allow the creation of large synthetic stones of jewellery-quality colour and clarity, said the report published on the Better Diamond Initiative website in September.

Singapore-based grown-diamonds manufacturer IIA Technologies has said that growth opportunity has arisen because the gems and jewellery industry absorbs almost all of the mined diamond output, which is already projected to decline. In addition, the unpredictable quality of excavated produce makes it difficult to use it in high-technology applications. Grown diamonds are also filling an important gap as a new source of raw material for the manufacturing and energy companies.

In a report published last year, Grown Diamond Impact 2050, consulting firm Frost & Sullivan said the global mined-diamond supply is estimated to plunge to 13 million carats in 2050, from a projected 133 million carats in 2014. It predicted a steady increase in demand was likely to lead to a shortage of about 248 million carats by 2050.



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GJF's journey at a glance

The All India Gems & Jewellery Trade Federation (GJF) is the only trade body which has a rich legacy of voluntary service by jewellers for the benefit and upliftment of fellow industry colleagues as well as artisans engaged in the profession. The objective is the well-being and progress of one and all, and GJF members devote valuable time to protect the industry, promote knowledge and thus ensure the progress of the gems and jewellery sector. The GJF has had to endure tough times — be they harsh rules and regulations, shrinking economy or even baseless and ill-motivated allegations; but the industry has stood united and triumphed against all odds.



Over the past ten years, the GJF has played a vital role in working efficiently on all the three important verticals of Progress, Protection and Promotion of trade. It has made path-breaking advances that have changed the lives of millions of people engaged in this profession. All projects listed below are a testimony of its dedicated efforts.

PROTECT

- The GJF held multi-city conferences with industry leaders and made representations to the Union Finance Minister on excise duty levy during 2005-2012. Industry concerns were explained and finally efforts paid off when the levy was abolished.
- On March 17, 2012 it spearheaded a nationwide agitation against the 2012-13 Budget proposal of excise duty on jewellery. It declared a five-day-long jewellery *bandh* and supported a 21-day-long *bandh* by local associations across India. On May 7, 2012 the Union Finance Minister announced his decision to withdraw excise duty on branded and unbranded jewellery.
- The GJF is representing the industry on hallmarking before the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). It has held various regional meetings and is now working closely with the abovementioned bodies on policy formulation.
- The GJF organised security workshops for the jewellery industry that addressed the issue of robberies that had reached alarming levels in the interiors of Maharashtra in 2007.
- On June 11, 2009 the organisation handed over a memorandum of industry demands to the Union Minister of Finance.
- As the apex body of the gems and jewellery sector, the GJF has since 2008 made several representations to the Minister of Commerce and Industry as well as top government officials on the formation of a national council. Several industry leaders have supported this initiative and approval is due soon.
- To safeguard the industry and its affiliates, the GJF has been giving great importance to industry needs and demands. Since its inception it has been preparing pre-Budget recommendations. It invites opinions and recommendations from across the nation and sends the same to the Union Finance Minister for due consideration.
- On January 29, 2013, the GJF convened a special meet of GJF members to discuss the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the Hallmarking Act, and the 2013 pre-Budget proposal.

- On February 7, 2013, the GJF met Union Minister for Consumer Affairs and apprised him about the issues plaguing the industry. A wide range of topics were discussed during the meeting, including mandatory hallmarking, weights and measures and ban of cadmium in jewellery. The same day it also held a press conference to explain the problems being faced by the industry.
- In June 2013, the GJF conducted a nationwide press conference on the gold crisis that was triggered by restrictions on import of gold. In July 2013, the GJF delegation made a representation to the Central Board of Customs and Excise (CBCE).
- On June 27, 2013 it convened a high-level round-table discussion on gold policy in association with the FICCI. Leaders of the industry as well as members of the allied industry and banking sectors participated in the discussion.
- On July 19, 2013, a GJF delegation made a representation to the CBCE, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) on the gold crisis, following restriction on import of gold, customs duty hike, mandatory hallmarking, Prevention of Money Laundering Act, weight and measures and other pressing issues.
- In August 2013, a GJF delegation presented the government with its Swarn Bhachao Abhiyan, a project envisaged to utilise the gold lying idle with Indian households and thus help the government save on foreign exchange and control current account deficit.
- In August 2013, the GJF and the GJEPC held a joint meeting to discuss the gold import policy and other issues faced by the industry. The GJF thereafter apprised the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry on the GJEPC's expression of its inability to take care of the domestic sector.
- In July 2014, GJF delegates met the director general of income tax investigation, Mumbai, with regard to hassle-free jewellery transportation across various states.
- In March 2015, GJF delegates met additional secretary – investments to discuss the proposed Gold Monetization Scheme.
- During March and May 2015, the GJF organised press conference in 12 different cities across India and held meetings with the government to show industry concern on the imposition of compulsory PAN card requirement on jewellery sales over ₹1 lakh.
- On March 18, 2015, GJF delegates met Union Minister of State, Home Affairs, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Commissioner- Investigation, Central Board of Direct Taxes, and Director General, Central Industrial Security Force on Jewellers Identification Card (JID) and various

issues impacting the transit of gems and jewellery in the country.

- On June 11, 2015, the gem and jewellery industry raised ₹1.23 crore for Nepal earthquake victims. The funds raised were handed over to Amit Shah, BJP president.
- On October 1, 2015, the GJF organised an interactive seminar with income tax officials for the benefit of its members.

PROGRESS

- In 2005, newsletters were devised as a way to disseminate knowledge and information on industry issues, events and happenings.
- Between 2005 and 2010, the GJF held interactive trade meetings in urban and rural areas, educating the industry on new developments and disseminating knowledge on the importance of local associations joining the national federation
- In February 2006, GJF held seminars on technical aspects of manufacturing, adoption of new technology and machinery to increase production and cut loss of gold in manufacturing.
- GJF organised jewellery design contest for jewellery artisans and designers between September and November 2006.
- In 2007-08, GJF organised seminars on various topics such as the changing jewellery retail scenario, survival and growth of joint family businesses, increasing store profitability and return on investments, changing purchase patterns of end consumers, building store identity and gold loans and hedging.
- In 2007-08, the GJF affiliated local associations all across India. Incentives were given to local associations for regional development.



Initiatives



- In 2007-08, it organised conferences on the road ahead for the industry called Industry Authorities Meet (IAM)
- A jewellery retail store business excellence model called Trustmark was launched. It is an assurance to a customer on a jeweller's commitment to quality and best business practices.
- In 2009, GJF implemented uniform gold rate policy across India for benefit of customers.
- An MoU was signed with the Israel Diamond Institute for promoting positive relations between the gems and jewellery industries of both countries.
- Vinaya, a grand educational summit, was conducted in more than 24 cities across India. It gave an opportunity to retail jewellers to enhance working standards and adopt new technologies and methods to enhance business.
- On October 31, 2011, GJF opened its first regional office in Kolkata. It was part of the Federation's long-term plan to decentralise operations and proactively address concerns of members.
- In November 2011, the first intercity networking meet of Preferred Manufacturer of India was launched in Hyderabad. To date, two PMI programmes have been successfully organised

with two grand meets and five regional meets each. PMI 3 was also launched recently in Hyderabad.

- In October 2012, the GJF conducted an exclusive B2B exhibition called Abhushanam and an entertainment programme called Alankarik in Raipur. Since then it is being organised every year.
- In January 2011, the GJF scheduled a leadership summit on various subjects to help jewellers mobilise valuable information on industry related topics. From 2011 to 2014 the leadership summit was organised every year.
- In September 2013, the GJF conducted regional meetings and Unnathi at Nasik, Maharashtra.
- In December 2013, Star Scheme, a programme meant for training sales associates of jewellers under the aegis of the National Skill Development Corporation completed 147 batches across India. The Western region comprising Maharashtra and Gujarat, has 55 per cent share while the Southern region has 34 per cent share. Total number of trainees trained under this programme till March 31, 2014 is 2,075.
- In June 2014, the GJF organised the first Labham programme at Rajkot. Labham is an educational programme for compliance and best business practices. A reference book on compliance and best business practices was also released and distributed among participants. Since its inception, the GJF has conducted 16 such programmes.
- In July 2014, the GJF constituted the Chain Store Committee. The committee subsequently held a meeting that was attended by 19 corporates. It deliberated on various aspects of the Gold Savings Scheme.
- From November 17 to December 1, 2014, the GJF organised Alankar Utsav, a 15-day festival in which 194 stores participated. Every day one customer was chosen as *lakhpati* through a lucky draw with a sedan as the bumper prize.

PROMOTE

- The GJF supported GJEPC's India International Jewellery Show from 2005-2008.
- The GJF organised the world's largest jewellery festival, Lucky Lakshmi, to incentivise customers and increase footfalls in retail outlets in 2006. With the support of the Ministry of Commerce, the World Gold Council, the Diamond Trading Corporation and the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, the GJF executed Lucky Lakshmi in 118 cities in 18 states across India. It helped the industry generate revenues worth ₹ 3000 crore. In 2008, Lucky Lakshmi was celebrated on a bigger scale.
- In 2007, GJF organised press conferences in 18 cities on hallmarking.
- In 2007, a seminar was organised in association with KPMG on quality standards and retail science.



Initiatives

- Educational seminars, workshops and development programmes were held in 2007-08 in association with the Indian Institute of Jewellery (IJ). More than 5,000 industry representatives trained on sales management, quality standards, inventory management, jewellery identification and metallurgy.
- The GJF held a seminar on quality and standards in jewellery industry in 2007.
- The GJF supported various exhibitions in New Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Jaipur, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Cochin and various parts of India to promote the jewellery industry in 2007-08.
- The GJF, along with the GJEPC, organised meets with a Japanese business delegation in February 2008.
- In May-August 2008, GJF organised the Smart Jeweller, a unique CRM programme for manufacturers. The Smart Jeweller programme is aimed at promoting manufacturers and retailers through a marketing tool called Trends Today.
- The GJF associated with BIS on a seminar on Safe Storage of Valuables in Jewellery Establishments in January 2009.
- The GJF associated with the FICCI on International Brand Conclave 2009, Vision & Trends, Focus Sector Gems & Jewellery.
- On July 9, 2009, a seminar on business development and future growth in gems and jewellery industry was organised at Hyderabad.
- A seminar on traditional business management and development was organised by the GJF in Mumbai on July 20, 2009.
- A members' resource directory Acquaint was launched at IJJS 2008.
- The GJF organised seminars jointly with the GJEPC on the growth of the industry at IJJS 2009.
- The GJF organised education workshops jointly with the Indian Institute of Jewellery at Indore and Bhopal in 2009.
- It distributed gold rate banners twice across the nation.
- It organised trade delegations to the Bangkok Gems & Jewellery Fair and the Hong Kong Jewellery Fair in 2009.
- It organised a networking trip to Goa during IJJS Signature 2010.
- The Marathwada Jewellers Meet that was attended by jewellers of eight districts of Marathwada on January 9, 2010 was organised by the GJF.
- It supported the jewellers meet at Nasik on January 10, 2010. The meet was attended by more than 10,000 *swarnakars* from across Maharashtra.
- Multi Commodity Exchange of India seminar was organised for understanding advantages, features and benefits of hedging on January 11, 2010.
- An FICCI-Technopark knowledge report on Unlocking the Potential of Gems & Jewellery Sector was released on January 15, 2010.
- It organised the GJF Nite in 2010 and since then the entertainment night

is being organised every year.

- In 2011, it organised the first National Jewellery Awards honouring innovation and creativity in the industry.
- The GJF introduced Jewellers Identity Card (JID) to ease problems in transporting precious gold jewellery across locations in the country for its members and their employees.
- In April 2013, it organised a meet in Mumbai to boost the business prospects of manufacturers and wholesalers and form a committee.
- In April 2013, the GJF led a delegation of 40 members to Basel, Switzerland.
- In August 2013, it led a delegation of 21 members to the Hong Kong Jewellery Fair.
- In July 2014, it launched the B2B magazine, *Gems & Jewellery Times*.
- In March 2014, a GJF delegation comprising 60 members visited the Istanbul Jewellery Show.
- In March 2015, a delegation visited the Hong Kong Jewellery Show.
- In May 2015, a delegation visited the JCK Vegas show in the USA.

All those who represent GJF have one thing in common — selfless service. They have given their hearts and souls in reaching out to members in every nook and corner of India. The GJF has attained the coveted status of the single largest national trade body. It will continue to serve in the best possible manner and strive towards building a brighter tomorrow for the industry.

It is also privileged to have the trust and faith of the entire jewellery fraternity. It will remain united and fight all odds.

Recently, there have been baseless allegations against the GJF and its activities. In such a situation, all members should put up a united voice. This will motivate the Federation to send across the clear message that the organisation works for a cause that is meaningful for all

GJF NITE 2015



The seventh edition of GJF Nite was celebrated with great fanfare at Hotel Renaissance in Mumbai on August 6. The signature event of the All India Gems and Jewellery Trade Federation (GJF) was a glittering affair that was attended by over 1,500 members, industry dignitaries and foreign delegates — all of whom used the platform to engage and network with industry mates. The GJF Nite, an annual entertainment and networking event during the Indian International Jewellery Show (IIJS), serves as a great platform for jewellers across the country to socialise with one another while enjoying a fashion and musical extravaganza. As Nitin Kadam, Convener of the GJF Nite Committee remarked, “Jewellers from all over India come for the India International Jewellery Show (IIJS) and a social networking meet like the GJF Nite is the perfect platform to interact. The entertainment programme is also a stress-buster.”

This year’s Nite, powered by Kiran Gems and supported by Swarovski Gemstones, JAS, Royal Chains, Shilpi, Pranda Group and Bright Outdoor Media, was fun-filled and entertaining. Beautiful models showcased unique collections from jewellery houses and the presence of Rio Tinto and the World Gold Council as associate partners enhanced business avenues and growth by encouraging dialogues among the jewellery fraternity.

The industry partner of the event was another GJF Initiative — the Preferred Manufacturer of India (PMI) while BVC Logistics was the logistics partner. According to Nitin Khandelwal, Co-convener GJF Nite Committee, the event, while providing a networking opportunity for people in the fraternity, also gave jewellers the occasion to showcase their latest designs to their peers.



SECOND EDITION OF ABHUSHANAM HELD IN NAGPUR

The All India Gems & Jewellery Trade Federation (GJF), the national nodal and the largest single trade body in India for the promotion and growth of trade in gems and jewellery, organised the second edition of Abhushanam on October 5-6 at Hotel Center Point in Nagpur.

The purpose of the B2B exhibition was to promote the growth of gems and jewellery trade in the Vidarbha region. Over 4,200 jewellery buyers and sellers from across the region came together on this unique platform to network and build new relationships.

Over 35 exhibition stalls were put up to showcase distinct and innovative designs and a unique variety of trendy products in diamond, gold, silver and coloured stones.

This unique GJF initiative strives to create growth avenues for jewellers by acting as a catalyst for networking between the supply chain of manufacturers and retailers.

Sreedhar G V, Chairman GJF, said, "We at GJF are committed to working towards the growth of the trade in this challenging business environment. In this context, strengthening the jewellery supply chain

model in the country is critical. The idea behind Buyer Seller Meets is to build strong bonds between manufacturers and retailers for delivering finest jewellery pieces in the country. We are delighted with the warm response this initiative has been garnering and we are confident of bigger success in the future."

Nitin Khandelwal, Regional Chairman, GJF, said, "Considering the challenges faced by the trade we believe Abhushanam will immensely benefit jewellery manufacturers and retailers in the region. This is the second time that we are organising such an event to help the jewellery trade. This unique platform plays a crucial role in bringing trade peers together to mitigate risk and find newer business opportunities." ■



FIRST PROGRAMME OF PMI 3 HELD IN HYDERABAD

The first programme of the third edition of the Preferred Manufacturers of India (PMI 3) Regional Networking Meet was held from October 7-9 at the Hotel Leonia Holistic Destination, Hyderabad.

A regional round table conference was also organised at the same venue as an extension of the event to form a think-tank to address the growing concerns on various industry issues in South India. Leading jewellers from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala actively participated in the programme and offered enlightened perspectives on industry and finding solutions in the interest of all stakeholders.

The meet that saw the participation of 40 distinguished jewellery manufacturers and 107 leading retailers helped in the formation of new relationships, introduction of new products and exchange of new ideas. The participants were amongst India's most distinguished manufacturers and a wide variety of jewellery in gold, diamond and coloured stones were on display for the benefit of the discerning retailers from the south zone. Besides G V Sreedhar, Chairman GJF, Nitin Khandelwal, Convener, PMI Committee and other senior GJF

Board members, the round table conference was attended by leading Indian jewellers such as Sandeep Kulahali (Titan Company), Ba. Ramesh (Thangamayil), Jitendra Vummidi (VBJ), Balu C P (Manappuram), Iflu A (Malabar Gold), Rejish O S (Joyalukkas), Diyvesh Shah (Tribhovandas Bhimji Zaveri), Shemi Pillai (Chemmanur International Jewellers) and Akash Jain (Reliance Jewels). Discussions were conducted around three major issues — aligning the industry in a competitive business environment, adoption of ethical business practices (code of conduct), and building the Make in India concept to make India the ultimate destination for jewellery shopping.

G V Sreedhar said, "The Hyderabad PMI meet has been a huge success. It



gave manufacturers and retailers in-depth knowledge and understanding of the current environment in the jewellery business. Even the regional round table conference created new ideas and feasible solutions to push growth avenues for the industry.”

“Due to large participation, the industry was treated to a unique showcase of various designs, range and finish. Besides product innovations, good business practices and robust after sales service was also an integral part,” he added. PMI is a marketing opportunity for the industry and helps develop businesses by linking the supply chain components. In the past, the GJF successfully organised PMI meets in cities such as Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, New Delhi, Kolkata, Indore, Mumbai and Goa.

CRAFTING the Next

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India's gems and jewellery industry has significant potential for enhanced growth, value addition and exports and it is only certain structural challenges that are keeping the industry from reaching its full potential. **Monideepa Choudhuri** makes a case for technology-led innovations in jewellery design and manufacturing and creation of more jewellery hubs to organise the fragmented segment.





Jewellery has always held a place of pride in the Indian mindscape. Apart from its investment and adornment values, the singular position it occupies is due in good measure to the fact that Indian jewellery is an elevated art — both in design and kaarigari. Ornaments of great splendour and from across different regions thrive in the life and culture of the country and draw trade and commerce, making this land of the Kohinoor and the Patiala necklace the ideal hub for jewellery craft. India is not only the largest consumer of jewellery, it also boasts of a robust manufacturing segment as well. In fact, gems and jewellery has always been ahead of other Indian manufacturing industries. Composed of highly-skilled artisans, it is the second largest employer after Information Technology and among the top three foreign exchange earners. India is also the largest hub — both in quantity and value — for cut and polished diamonds in the world, with 11 out of every 13 diamonds mined in the world being processed here.

THE THREATS

However, it would be unwise to think that the sector is perpetually on a roll. The past few years have been perilous with international market uncertainties, rising competition and New Age consumers throwing up inherent vulnerabilities into sharp focus.

The industry suffers from a deficiency in branding, unfriendly regulatory mechanisms, absence of a globally-accepted purity certification and, most importantly, a delayed and staggered response to present-day consumer demands. Much of this can be attributed to the fragmented nature and labour-intensive supply landscape of the industry. The organised sector, especially retail, has no doubt been expanding — over 20 per cent currently — but, it is still lagging behind its counterparts in other countries.

As a PricewaterhouseCoopers study has commented: “The gems and jewellery industry faces several issues such as limited supply infrastructure, high import dependence and regulatory curbs... This has led to various challenges for key players such as low technology



Standardisation and quality are today the primary demands of the market.

adoption and limited research-led innovation.”

In fact, around 70 per cent of jewellery processing in India is carried out manually by small manufacturers with little or no access to machinery and automation. Albeit, a section thrives on the “premium hand-crafted jewellery” USP, the bulk are poor in terms of finish and do not meet up to the expected standards of today’s consumers.

CASE FOR JEWELLERY HUBS

According to a joint study ‘Gems and Jewellery: Contributing to Make in India’ that was recently released by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) and Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI), consumer preferences have rapidly changed with the advent of globalisation and in such a scenario Indian manufacturers need to adopt new methods and engage in research.

Consumers, both global and domestic, are today in tune with the latest trends and uncompromising about quality of design and finish. Standardisation and quality are, in fact, the primary demands of the market. Unfortunately, for the fragmented segment of jewellery manufacturing, the use of technology and automation is a challenge. Since working capital requirements are high, investment in

Image courtesy: Sawansukha Jewellers



AMRITSAR



JAIPUR



GUJARAT



MUMBAI



Jadau

Kundan, Minakari

Junagadh, Polki

Rajkot, Colour stone

Machine made



Surat. Diamond



automation is not only prohibitive but appears frivolous as well. Even in diamond cutting and polishing, India uses less technology than its global counterparts. Blade sawing machines predominate over laser machines and the usage of auto faceting and polishing machines is also low.

On the other hand, organised jewellery manufacturing in modern units — with focus on design, quality, standardisation and minimal gold loss — can translate to consistent fine quality that is recognised internationally. In organised manufacturing, players operate primarily from jewellery manufacturing parks that are designed to reduce cost and optimise efficiency. They offer technology-enabled environments that are conducive to growth and quality production.

In a recent representation to the government, therefore, the All India Gems and Jewellery Trade Federation (GJF) urged the government

to create domestic jewellery manufacturing parks where shared infrastructure facilities can reduce overheads and support the Make in India initiative. In this context the Federation also stated: “Getting land for factory units in government-owned sites such as special economic zone (SEZ) and Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) areas will become easy if the gems and jewellery sector, which contributes six-seven per cent to the GDP and 14 per cent of exports, gets industry status.”

The case of Turkey offers great learning. Until the 1990s, its jewellery industry was as fragmented as India’s before a series of government initiatives, including establishment of jewellery clusters, leveraged its rich heritage to competitive competence. Currently Kuyumcukent, with around 2,500 shops and production centres, is the largest integrated



goldsmith centre in the world. The expansion of the processing base has added value to the industry and Turkish jewellers can now charge higher mark-up for their jewellery.

Creation of jewellery parks and hubs could be relatively trouble-free in a large country like India because regional variations in customer preferences have naturally developed clusters of specific kinds of jewellery (see graphic). Some parks already exist; there are parks in Mumbai and Surat to promote the diamond industry and very recently, in June 2015, Swarna Shilpi was also set up in Kolkata to provide wholesalers, retailers and manufacturers compact infrastructure where they can purchase materials, design and manufacture as well as assay jewellery under one roof.

Shared facilities ensure higher sustainability of operations and better working conditions for goldsmiths; now, with Make in India prompting

investor-friendly policies, bold regulatory initiatives and movement on a host of other mechanisms, their establishment across other jewellery clusters could be stepped up. The rate of change, however, will depend on cumulative efforts of various stakeholders.

CASE FOR TECHNOLOGY-LED DESIGN

The ingenuity of Indian jewellers has over the ages enabled the creation of some of the most iconic designs. The variety of designs that the country offers is also incredible. However, in the current rollercoaster luxury market, with products and brands scrambling for a share of the consumer's wallet, it is only technological verve that can keep jewellers competitively ahead.

A recent Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) and Thought Arbitrage Research Institute (TARI) survey has

Source: India Jewellery Review 2013: A T Kearney/FICCI

stated that the gems and jewellery sector in India needs the attention of both government and industry members to drive innovations in terms of new designs, processes and skill development of the workforce to sustain in global markets.

Innovations in jewellery design are needed in order to meet changing tastes. The industry is no doubt proficient in traditional designs, but slow in uptake of design innovations. Adoption and development of modern designs in the fragmented sector is limited because of low technology and automation use. On the other hand, technology-focused countries such as China and Thailand are producing international-standard jewellery and establishing their presence. Rapid urbanisation and acceptance of Western designs have also made design innovation crucial for the domestic market.

Design in small-scale manufacturing set-ups is traditional — done on paper which *kaarigars* then use to fabricate out of metal or carve out of wax. The use of computer-aided design (CAD) systems for model making and prototyping is low.

CAD allows designers to work more quickly and easily create variations of a design theme. Besides the fact that cut-paste of motifs is quicker, CAD increases design precision and level of detail. Even the most complex pieces of jewellery are possible because designers can zoom in and add details to very small areas.

Today, the technology is gaining popularity in the organised sector, powered by a new generation of professionally-trained, technology-driven designers. Many manufacturing facilities are also equipping themselves with the latest CAD/CAM and other advanced design systems.

This has, in turn, triggered a need for skilled labour with unique skill sets. As the Assocham-TRAI study says, “The high growth rate of this industry indicates potential high demand for skilled manpower in future. In such a scenario, inherent skills in goldsmith families and on-the-job training may not be sufficient, especially when the need is to modernise so as to beat global competition.”



The GJF has for quite some time now been pursuing with the government to develop infrastructure to promote and standardise professional courses as well as introduce training programmes to improve skill sets of engaged *kaarigars*. A systematic and collective effort by industry and government — both in terms of investment as well as curriculum — can provide the impetus in the right direction.

GOING FORWARD

The unique sensibilities of India's gems and jewellery industry can rarely be replicated elsewhere. Its confluence of traditional and contemporary and well-established capabilities across the value chain is the differentiator. Having said that, it is only technology and research-led innovation in both design and manufacturing that can ensure its long-term future.

Better designs can enable jewellers to differentiate, and accuracy, control and speed, which new machine tools provide, can help jewellers take on more jobs and produce new designs that they would not have attempted earlier. Advanced production techniques combined with traditional artisanal skills of *kaarigars* can only enhance efficiency. Jewellery manufacturing hubs can offset the issue of large investments that are required in technology and research. Recently, FICCI's Gems & Jewellery, Luxury, Lifestyle Forum and the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACOC) announced a strategic alliance in which large US retailers will work with Indian manufacturers to identify, invest and support the development of large shared regional jewellery manufacturing hubs. It is initiatives such as these that will help the sector flex its creative muscle and stay ahead of the competition. ■



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“ India can be
Jeweller,
to the World”



Somasundaram P R joined the World Gold Council in January 2013 as Managing Director, India. With over 27 years' experience across diverse industries including the FMCG and banking sectors, Som is responsible for leading the World Gold Council's activities across the Indian gold market. In an email interview with the *Gems & Jewellery Times*, Som talks about the timeless relevance of gold, various factors that affect the metal's price performance, hallmarking, policy initiatives, India's gold jewellery landscape and the World Gold Council's vision for India to become the jeweller to the world.



The yellow metal seems to have lost its sheen in the last few years. How would you define the position of gold in the consumer mind today?

Gold remains as relevant today as it ever was. Demand variations are insignificant when you look at the size of the absolute. For many socio-economic groups without access to formal banking arrangements, gold will remain the enduring destination for family savings.

Jewellery is considered an investment option and serves as collateral for lending to a large class of borrowers. It is also seen as a hedge against inflation.

Millions have come up from the poverty line and the first asset class they tend to invest in is gold.

Over the past five years, annual demand has averaged 895 tonnes, which is equivalent to 26 per cent of the total physical demand worldwide. This underlying faith in the metal as an essential component of the household savings portfolio and a preserver of wealth in the face of inflation has put the spotlight on India as a significant holder of gold stocks.

Can India's handcrafted jewellery be developed into a brand and synced to the Made in India campaign?

Our vision for the gold industry in India is to activate the gold tourism circuit that showcases intricate Indian handcrafted jewellery. Every stakeholder within the sector will have to contribute to realise this vision. *Kaarigars* will have to be empowered and encouraged to constantly innovate on compelling contemporary designs and this can only be made possible with the support of traders, manufacturers and retailers.

The policy environment should allow gold trade to operate in a free and transparent manner and enable industry to embrace the bigger vision of becoming the jeweller to the world.

What about the current demand-supply landscape of gold jewellery in India?

Demand for gold jewellery is embedded deeply in the cultural, social and economic fabric of the country. Total jewellery demand in India for 2014 was up by eight per cent — at 662.1 tonnes in comparison to 2013. As per our Gold Demand Trends report for Q2 2015, jewellery demand was down 23 per cent year-on-year, partly because of heavy unseasonal rains in Q1 and drought in Q2, which reduced rural incomes. Our expectation for the rest of the year is in the range of 900-1000 tonnes.

The upcoming wedding and festival season in India suggests healthy prospects for the jewellery market and we have seen a positive uptick in demand in the last few weeks as Indian consumers are taking advantage of the softening in gold price.

Kaarigars have to constantly innovate on contemporary designs



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Due to recent structural changes in the gold market the effect of US interest rate is less relevant today

Of late there has been a slide in gold prices. Do you expect it to continue or will prices stabilise at a certain level?

Gold's price performance can be understood not only in the light of temporary reactions to economic developments but also the importance of the metal's long-term dynamics. The price movement this year primarily reflects developments in the West. While there are no doubts that positive news on US recovery, the strength of the US dollar and the possibility of rising interest rates does impact perceptions of gold, it misses certain key points.

First, while the popular view is that higher US dollar interest rates are bad for gold, the reality is slightly more nuanced. Given the recent structural changes in the gold market (including the emergence of India and China as key pillars of demand and the growth of Singapore and Shanghai as gold trading markets), the effect of US interest rate is less relevant than previously. Second, economic growth is not necessarily bad for gold demand. Our analysis suggests that holding all other things equal, for every one per cent increase in global GDP, jewellery demand will grow by five per cent. Increase in wealth drives jewellery and

investment demand. China and India are excellent examples – as people have become richer, gold demand has increased.

Finally, the fundamentals underpinning the global gold market remain strong and diverse. Different people buy gold for different reasons. Jewellery, technology, central banks and investor demand are all driven by different forces. Underpinning the demand story is the fact that supply remains constrained and is unlikely to increase substantially any time soon.

How do you see the import of jewellery from countries with which India has FTAs?

In 2013, India had suspended an exemption on tariff for Thai gold from the Free Trade Agreement resulting in lower exports of gold from Thailand to India. India also levied a low import tariff on Thai gold of only 1.01 per cent, while the normal tariff is 15 per cent. This led to some traders seeing this as an opportunity to export gold under the Thailand-India FTA. In September 2013 India raised the gold jewellery import duty from 10 per cent to 15 per cent primarily aimed to reduce the burgeoning current account deficit. We believe that gold can be part of the solution to the challenges that India faces. The new Gold Monetisation Scheme will ease transfer of household gold into the financial system.

Gold hallmarking is in a sense at the crossroads today. What do you think are the primary reservations that need to be tackled on a priority basis to set the ball rolling?

Hallmarking is not a trade issue; it is the need of the hour for the Indian gold industry. In order to play a leading role in the global gold trade, creating trust among the brand-conscious and digitally-savvy Indian population is important.

To set the hallmarking ball rolling, some issues need to be tackled on a priority basis. First, the governance around hallmarking processes should be made more rigorous in order to reduce under-caratage of gold. Second, currently consumers do not insist on purchasing hallmarked jewellery as awareness is low. It is important therefore to drive awareness. Third, targeted expansion of hallmarking centres since the number of hallmarking centres are currently insufficient. Fourth, the BIS should develop a strong jeweller ratings system and technology solutions to support hallmarking.

Does the key to success of the jewellery industry lie in gold hallmarking?

Yes. Credible hallmarking will increase consumer confidence. Jewellery consumers have suffered from under-caratage and there is widespread lack of trust in the purity of Indian gold. This has compromised the export market and made gold less acceptable as collateral for other productive uses. Artisanal Indian jewellery is widely prized but India currently exports only \$8 bn worth of gold jewellery — eight per cent of the global gold market. It could increase to at least \$40bn if overseas buyers and financial markets could place trust in the purity of Indian gold.

Geological studies estimate that the country has substantial primary gold resources. How optimistic are you of India's potential to become a large gold producer?

Gold mining in India is very limited but reports do suggest that India has potential. In the current circumstances, however, pushing for a policy focused on gold mining may not be realistic in the short term. But, even while

India explores its mining potential, it can focus on increasing supply through organised recycling. Recent policy announcements on standard Indian gold coins and the monetisation scheme are likely to impact recycling positively.

What are the ways in which the proposed Gold Monetisation Scheme can be promoted and made effective?

Jewellery is precious and preferred but every item is not an heirloom and does not carry the same degree of emotional attachment. Gold Monetization Scheme should be seen as an alternative but a supplement that leverages people's passion for gold. Customers can open a deposit account with 30 grams of gold lying idle in the locker and earn interest in gold terms. It will increase consumer choice.

The Gold Monetisation Scheme must be marketed well, promoting the attractive features that individual banks

Gold mining has potential in India but pushing for a policy may not be realistic in the short term.



may include in the design of their offer within the monetisation framework to ensure that the household savings in gold can be tapped by the banking industry. At an initial stage the interest rates should be made attractive to receive an encouraging response.

Also, given the quantum of demand each year in India, a strong incentive would be to allow banks to import gold free of duty up to a certain quantum, determined by the amount of gold collected under the monetisation scheme. India can definitely draw from the example that Turkey presents of placing gold at the heart of the financial system which allowed consumers to deposit a minimum of one gram of gold with banks.

The success should not be measured in a short time frame, the scheme has to be marketed well and all parties involved, consumers, banks and melting centres should get familiar and comfortable over a period of time with the processes before it can be evaluated.

There is a suggestion from the jewellery industry that gold savings accounts with banks should also have a Demat option and gold savings held in Demat should be allowed to be traded in the stock market. What implications do you foresee?

These are good ideas that need to be evaluated as the scheme stabilises. Currently the gold savings account allows the depositors to earn interest by depositing gold over a period of one year. As per the scheme, the depositor will receive gold with interest post maturity. The option of linking a gold savings account to Demat is yet to be analysed and depending on the success of the Gold Monetisation Scheme this could be evaluated after discussions with the industry.

Urban Indian women now prefer jewellery where the role of gold is low in terms of both carat and look...

We can view this as an opportunity to get more people into gold; gold jewellery traditionally stands at the top of the value chain and therefore, upscaling such jewellery buyers is an opportunity. The demand for lightweight jewellery has grown over the last few years but this demand will grow parallelly with the demand for jewellery that is bought for adornment and investment. ■



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Image courtesy: Challani Jewellery Mart

HERE COMES THE **BRIDE**

As the wedding season draws near, to-be brides seek out the latest trends in jewellery. They spot the best on catwalks, fine tune them to their personalities and fashion the look they wish to wear on their special day.

It is thus imperative that businesses remain up to date on trends so that they can assemble inventories that can match up to demands, says **Anshu Gandhi**.

Gone are the days when the bride was blushing and demure, afraid to speak her mind. Brides of today are aware and confident and in tune with current trends in fashion and design. They demand styles that blend with their personalities and help them make a statement without being over the top. They also want to connect to the jewellery that they wear, whether it is for the big day or for every day.

From the *maangtika* to the toe ring, Indian brides are deemed unadorned unless they are bejewelled from head to toe. Every piece has to deliver a story and have a deep connection with emotions and identity. But, whatever is the individual style or the current fashion, the jewellery worn on the special day has to be truly representative of the wearer.

Today, the East has merged with the West, the modern with the traditional and the glamorous with the simple. As the 2015-16 bridal season draws close, businesses will expectedly attract the neo-Indian bride with what is trending across the country.



ANSHU GANDHI

is a design consultant with Mirrar Jewels and a visiting lecturer at the Department of Jewellery Design and Manufacturing, SNDT College and the Indian Institute of Gems and Jewellery.



Image courtesy: S K Seth & Co

The glitter of gold

Gold is getting bolder. Commodity prices and precious metal prices had caused gold’s popularity to waver, but now it is back with its lustre, plenty of intricate work and very strong design sensibilities that were lacking earlier. Modern brides are sensible and sensitive and search for their roots at this significant moment of their lives. They wish to hold on to their history and are, therefore, greatly attracted to old heirloom gold jewellery which is enhanced with a fusion of diamonds or coloured gemstones that add to their personal identity.

In India, there is also no better symbol of wealth than gold. Gold brought by the bride shows her family’s status and wealth and it is popularly believed that a bride wearing 24k gold on her wedding day will bring luck and happiness to her family. Over and above this is the ornamental value of gold. Women of every age and time have always loved wearing gold, and gold ornaments which are passed down from one generation to the next are forever.

Gold adds bling to every colour and outfit. Its sparkle and shine creates an aura of positivity and signifies the path to a secure future.



Versatile jewellery

New Age customers are not immune to the effects of the soaring cost of precious metals. So, to attract them it is very important for jewellers to provide multifunctional jewellery. So, a ring that can be turned into a bracelet, or a pendant that can transform into a pair of earrings, or a necklace that can turn into a face-embracing head gear, will be big draws. Not only can they be used in different ways, they can also be worn with all outfits.

Such kinds of jewellery give the bride the option of multiple looks with minimum investment. Detach, dismantle, add to and refresh jewellery pieces would be the mantra for every bridal trousseau.

Modular jewellery

Modular jewellery being the call of the day, bridal jewellery is adopting the trend like no other. These jewellery pieces are collapsible or detachable; so, a heavy necklace with a large pendant in the centre can easily detach itself into single strands that can be worn as a *patti* necklace or the centrepiece can be worn as a pendant. Similarly, a choker necklace can be split into a bracelet and a regular princess necklace.

Modular jewellery gives the bride the opportunity to wear a single heavy jewellery piece on the day of her wedding and also have multiple pieces of jewellery for everyday wear later.

The bridal jewellery trend moves back towards traditional and classic designs.



Image courtesy: Kirtilal Jewellers

The traditional way

Indian brides will go the classical and traditional way with big *naths* that have been making the rounds on the ramp of late. Even brides who do not have their nose pierced can be given the option to wear them by incorporating studs that can be temporarily worn. *Haathphools* — five rings that are connected to a central piece and further connected to a bracelet — represent timeless elegance and are going to be big this season, especially those encrusted with diamonds and coloured stones.

South Indian waistbands, *vanky* (arm bands), flower buns, elements of temple jewellery and the North Indian *kalire* — umbrella-shaped hangings from the *chooda* (bangles) that signify eternal love between the couple — will cross the barriers of North and South and make their ways into every bride's trousseau. ■

Classic colours

The colour choice for jewellery will remain classic. Colours like yellow and white which are commonly used for gold and platinum will continue to embrace red and green colour that suit the Indian bride.

Moreover, nude make-up and clothes in pastel shades that are in fashion currently will encourage brides to stick to a minimalistic colour palette when it comes to jewellery.

The bridal jewellery trend for India for both gold and diamond jewellery moves back towards traditional and classic designs. Diamond jewellery with fancy-cut diamonds in gold and platinum provide the ideal feel for the new bride. In gold, pulling out old looks and antiques is going to add a new angle to bridal jewellery. ■



Image courtesy: Horizons

Bridal trousseau

The only thing more important than the bride's dress on her wedding day is the jewellery. Not only does it enhance her beauty, it is also vital to the look she wants to recreate. Today, Indian bridal jewellery spans the entire magnificence of gold, diamonds, and gemstones. As the season of weddings commences, two designers speak on the trends and we take a look at some exquisite jewellery that will add elegance to a trousseau.



Images courtesy: GRT Jewellers

“Trends in bridal jewellery see an ebb and flow every year. Royal, multi-functional jewellery with nature-inspired designs such as bejewelled peacock feathers, diamond flowers and sparkling wings are catching up as a trend, especially in diamond jewellery. Sharp and sleek leaves outlined with intricate meenakari and silvery-white gold are going to rule the bridal market this year. Blue and green hues in gemstones, enamelled metals and pearls are going to be a la mode for years to come.

An elaborate diamond necklace with long danglers will be a perfect combination for the royal bridal look this year. *Jhoomers* and *maangtikas* will be replaced by elegant crown-style head gears in order to add the ultra-modern look. A qualified jewellery designer can help in the customisation of head accessories that can be worn as necklaces after the wedding is over. A dazzling diamond bracelet and a multiple-finger rings are ideal complements to the sparkling brooch or *kalgi* of the groom.

Monica Kapur



Image courtesy: Monica Kapur



“Today’s bride is stylish but also very savvy and practical. For her, jewellery is not merely an adornment, but an enhancement which she uses to express her personality. Jewellery is not about utility alone, but versatility as well. This is why she is a fan of modular jewellery, which is a whole of many parts. One can detach or add and get a new piece each time. A bride always looks for jewellery that she can wear at any age and still look glamorous. She wants opulence on her wedding day but she also needs to flaunt her jewellery at 60 and not look outdated. Jewellery brought for weddings is a milestone purchase and hence should have timeless glam. It is ultimate luxury that stands the test of time and has an emotional and functional connect. A woman experiments enough with costume jewellery; so, fine jewellery being a once-in-a-lifetime purchase should be trustworthy.”

Varuna D Jani



Images courtesy: NAC Jewellers



Images courtesy: Varuna D Jani

All images courtesy: Anand Shah



THE MAESTRO OF DESIGN

Anand Shah is the creator of timeless jewels. Recognised by the World Gold Council as one of the great designers, Shah has over the years created grandiose couture jewellery that are veritable works of art. Innovating with forms and materials while keeping gold at the heart, his jewellery is both breathtaking and distinctive. Blending gold with wood or glass or even oil paint comes as easily to him as crafting lacy skull caps and hair-cum-ear ornaments. Neither hailing from a family of jewellers nor a jewellery designer by training, Anand Shah is simply a creative genius who cannot be celebrated enough. As his World Gold Council profile succinctly says, “Designing jewellery is his religion, and gold is his muse.” In an email interview with the *Gems & Jewellery Times*, the award-winning designer expresses his great passion for design and the love with which he crafts.



How would you define your design language?

My design language is very unusual, not driven by any market force. It comes from the heart. In jewellery, it means marking out a pattern in gold which is the translation of an experience or a thought I might have. It is a hands-on endeavour of the mind, body and soul which is thoughtful as well as liberating.

If not a jeweller, what would you have been?

I am a designer and if I was not designing jewellery, I would have been into interior designing or fashion designing for sure. I had done various design assignments in college and joining a jewellery company thereafter happened in the natural course. However, it was my experience here that proved the turning point. I learnt about gold and gemstones and discovered my forte.

How and where did you learn the intricacies of the trade and jewellery manufacturing?

I never attended any training institute for a formal course in designing. Whatever, I learnt happened on the job at the jewellery company. And, since I belong to a Marwari family, the intricacies of business come naturally to me.

The industry still speaks of your first gold-and-wood award-winning design with reverence. Do you remember how it was inspired and born?

Honestly I do not remember it now. All I can recall is that it went unnoticed initially. But, the award catapulted me to fame.





You have changed the face of the gold jewellery industry with your innovative use of materials, methods and forms. Is the process of creation a seamless journey or do you improvise and experiment also?

I keep on improvising and experimenting all the time. That is how from my first creation in wood and gold, I have reached to glass and gold today. Design is not the replication of an inspiration but an interpretation.

It, therefore, involves experimentation and innovation with materials. At the same time, I strive to create jewellery that is beautiful as well as functional.

What role do gemstones play in your jewellery designs? Are they primary to it or are they enhancements?

Although I do not work with diamonds, gemstones are integral to my jewellery. But, I use them to enhance and embellish. It is gold that I really love. The warm glow of the metal is fascinating. It is malleable and throws open a whole universe of creative possibilities for a designer.



**What or who is your favourite muse?
Are your designs built on a single
inspiration or do many inspirations
fuse together?**

Nature is my favourite muse. I am inspired most by nature, especially flowers and birds.

**How important is the wearability factor
of designer jewellery?**

I would say, extremely important. There are of course some pieces that are just meant for the ramp. But, by and large, jewellery is meant to be worn every day and on special days too.

As a designer, when I see my jewellery adorn a woman, I am filled with great joy. I am sure the wearer, too, feels good with beautiful jewels. If the wearability factor is absent, a woman will not enjoy the jewellery as much.

**Do market trends influence you in any
way?**

No, market trends have never influenced my creations.

**Do you tell stories through your
creations or are they abstract?**

Yes, all my pieces tell stories. Like birds and nest, flowers of paradise. They have something to tell. My muse is nature and therefore always has a story.

**You are known to create new forms
of jewellery. How challenging is it to
marry technique and design in such
pieces?**

I am never constrained by any particular inspiration or form of jewellery. Ideas come to me spontaneously and then get transformed into a design.

Then, I experiment with metal and material and the entire creative process for me is pure happiness. I never think of it as a challenge.

**What is the one significant feature that
each of your creations possess?**

Each piece of jewellery is designed and created with a lot of enthusiasm and love. ■



Creative BRILLIANCE

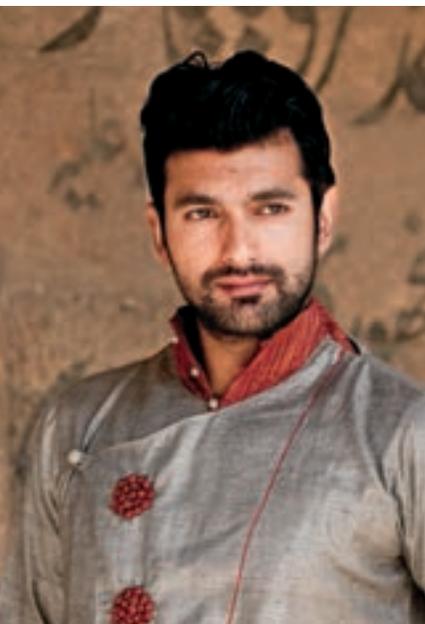
Raring to take on the world are two young designers from the west and east of India. One is an alumnus of the National Institute of Design, while the other is an Aircraft Maintenance Engineer whose passion for jewellery has led him into design. Their jewels are spectacular expressions of their mettle and in a market that leans towards the glitter of gold, they dare to be different and create collections that are both fine and fashionable. **Dhruv Singh** from Ahmedabad and **Utpal Bania** from Guwahati are definitely jewellery designers to watch out for.



Image courtesy: Utpal Bania



Image courtesy: Dhruv Singh



DHRUV SINGH

To say that Dhruv Singh is breaking barriers with his jewellery line is nothing short of an understatement. Versatility comes easy to the National Institute of Design alumnus and he amazes by crafting stunning fashion jewellery from the most mundane of materials, even cycle chains! Dhruv gained hands-on experience with leading national and international jewellery brands, including Isharya and Gitanjali Gems and Jewelry, before launching his eponymous label that offers exquisite fine and gold-plated fashion jewellery pieces that draw inspiration from organic and geometric forms, nature, timeless motifs and contemporary styles. They are meticulously handcrafted using precious metal, semi-precious stones, gold plating and pearl. Dhruv Singh jewellery is like contemporary, futuristic art embodied in an object. He shares his thoughts on:

His childhood or boyhood influence on his current work

As a child I was very creative. I started doodling at a very early age, drawing human figures and then adorning them with jewels. While growing up, I got to hear about and see many classic and historic pieces of jewellery. They inspired me and I wanted to create something on my own. Jewellery became my passion.

Jewellery over other lifestyle accessories

I had always been passionate about jewellery, so when I joined NID's Lifestyle Accessory Design course I was automatically inclined towards jewellery design. The idea of merging metals with stones and developing products that gives a person joy and identity appealed to me. I feel that designs are more than aesthetic symbols; they represent the power and importance of self-expression.

Challenging part of creating his kind of jewellery

The most challenging aspect is to keep myself in sync with a fast-moving market. One needs to be aware of prevailing prices, competition and designs, and evolve accordingly. The customer has to believe in you and your designs. One also has to restrain the imagination and create designs that may appeal to all. Designs have to be exclusive, but not over the top.

Learning from his work stints with national and international brands

Big brands have a different outlook on markets and use various methodologies to view customer segments. So, my experiences at national and international companies have taught me about trends and market sentiments. However, where design is concerned, I believe it is my creativity that allows me to come up with something unique.



All images in this spread courtesy: Dhruv Singh



His design language

My design language is minimalistic with a touch of nostalgia.

Collections or singular pieces

Be it a collection or a singular piece, my design language is usually the same. I love to create collections and weave stories around them; but often, respecting time and client requirements, I end up doing singular pieces.

The USP of his label

The essence of Dhruv Singh is clean lines with a touch of royalty.

Vision for the label five years down the line

My label should be popular among the masses. At the same time, it should also achieve exclusivity. Dhruv Singh will cater to both Indian and international markets and its designs will have the wow factor. I plan to launch various collections targeted at different market segments.

Customer segment he caters to

Currently, I customise exclusive designs for several Indian royal families and business families. Women who appreciate exclusive designs and experimental jewellery are also my clients. My jewellery is one of a kind and not replicated again.



Creativity is not only about ideas but also about execution as Utpal Bania is proving. By marrying traditional Assamese motifs with contemporary elegance, the designer is today drawing global attention to a type of jewellery that has so far remained in the shadows. The designer who gave up his career as an aircraft maintenance engineer to devote himself to reviving what is “a dying art”, (he has also written a book on the history of Assamese jewellery), lends a fashionable touch to timeless motifs, creating jewellery that is typically handmade, vibrant and stylish. A poet, writer, social worker and editor, he is a jewellery designer with a difference. He shares his thoughts on:

His aeronautical engineering background influencing his current work

It gives me the confidence to move towards my goal.

Foray into jewellery designing

Ranthali, my birthplace, is the manufacturing hub of traditional Assamese jewellery and ever since childhood I had been closely observing design and manufacturing. The process of crafting something beautiful out of metal, lac and enamel fascinated me and when I saw that Assamese jewellery was gradually losing its importance in a competitive world, I decided to do something about it. I had also met Prince Andrew of England when I was working as an aircraft engineer and happened to show him images of Assamese jewellery. He was wowed and that changed my life. I plunged myself into designing and in December 2013, showcased my jewellery at the India International Trade Fair in New Delhi. It was significant that Assam won the gold medal that year.

The challenging aspect of creating his kind of jewellery

The toughest challenge is a market where bling rules. Today artificial jewellery has completely taken over the attention and wallet of the consumer. My jewellery, on the other hand, is about aesthetics. It is traditional in character and will never go out of style.

UTPAL BANIA



All images in this spread courtesy: Utpal Bania

Cultural influence

Jewellery has always played an important role in Assamese culture. In ancient times jewellery was worn by men as well. Take the *gamkharu* (a broad ornament worn on the wrist) for instance, worn by men in medieval Assam. Manufacturing gold ornaments was a flourishing business then. Gold dust was abundantly found in the sands of different rivers of the state and the foil which was used in the making of ornaments. My jewellery draws design inspiration from elements of culture and nature. Even the manufacturing method is traditional — creating the main jewellery frame of gold and using lac as filling material.

Design language

My designs are based purely on traditional Assamese motifs, which are mostly drawn from nature and the culture of the region. *Japi*, for instance, is inspired by the traditional Assamese headgear, *dholbiri* by the Assamese drum, *junbiri* by the crescent moon and so on.

Collections or singular pieces

My collections are essentially based on the style of traditional jewellery. However, I add modern touches so that it attracts the attention of New Age customers and the global community.

The USP of his label

The USP of my label is the indigenous look.

Vision for your label five years down the line

My vision is to make Assamese jewellery world famous. It is distinctive in character, but has so long remained in the shadows. I want to change all that through my label. This is why I have made modern interpretations and will continue with further experiments and innovation.

Customer segment he caters to

My jewellery is affordable so that every woman can experience the uniqueness of wearing traditional designs. My single point focus is to popularise and revive a dying art and thereby also galvanise the industry.

Expansion plans

I am expanding my brand through e-commerce, social media and retail outlets. With the idea of putting the spotlight on my jewellery, I have started a Facebook page Assamese Traditional Axomia Gohana, and this is really going a long way in spreading the word.



Silver Shining

Despite global economic uncertainty, silver jewellery exports increased 40 per cent in 2014-15 from the previous year. **Mary Ann Alapatt** speaks to leading silver jewellers to gauge the reasons behind this phenomenon and identify the way forward for this dynamic segment.



Image courtesy: Jewel Ace International



According to performance statistics released by the Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), the silver segment was the best performer in the overall export basket of gems and jewellery in 2014-15 — registering an increase of 40 per cent compared to the previous year. Silver jewellery worth US\$ 2 billion was exported compared to US\$ 1.4 billion in 2013-14.

To pass off this steep growth in silver jewellery exports to the notion that dispirited global consumers are trading down from gold is too simplistic. Today, silver jewellery is perceived as trendy, with hi-fashion and luxury brands putting it at par with designer jewellery. According to the Silver Institute, global silver jewellery consumption is expected to grow by five per cent in 2015 alone — and not all of it can be attributed to moderate price.



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Image courtesy: Silver Emporium

An overwhelming majority in the Indian gems and jewellery industry today believe that besides the fact that silver is affordable and blessed by positive positioning, design brilliance and manufacturing excellence is playing a major role in driving demand for Indian products.

Different factors at work

It is a rule of thumb that when markets are vulnerable, the ratio of silver to gold purchase increases heavily. In India, since gold imports have to face a lot of restrictions, its price fluctuates often. Silver prices, on the other hand, have remained more or less stable and this had prompted franchise brands to invent ways to expand their businesses.

“A fall in prices has allowed silver jewellery manufacturers to invest in new technology and equipment that have enabled the creation of better designs and a boom in the export segment,” says Rahul Mehta, managing director of Silver Emporium, whose main export locations are in the USA, Middle East and parts of Asia.

Justin Varkey, CEO and managing director of Jewel Ace International, a jewellery house renowned for *thewa* and *meenakari* exports to the USA, is in total agreement: “Design has been a deciding factor behind the rise of silver jewellery. Almost 40 per cent of the rise in demand has been due to innovation in design.

“It is true that fluctuations in gold prices have driven people towards silver but it is also a fact that the metal has responded well. Silver is excellent for experimenting with designs. It is also affordable and the quality of finish first-rate,” he adds.

Leo Silver Art is also doing brisk business, courtesy its eloquent designs. “Besides being an affordable metal, silver offers excellent scope for creativity and design innovations. This has gone a long way in making the metal popular,” says its proprietor, Manish Punamiya. Leo Silver Art caters to pan-India customers and Punamiya feels that the Indian market itself is testament to the fact that silver is shining.



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All images on this page courtesy: Silver Emporium

Silver jewellery stands above the clutter of gold and diamonds and there is plenty of experimentation because of the metal's high workability factor.

“The Indian market for silver has gone up by large margins,” agrees Umesh Gupta, managing director of ACPL Jewels, a major exporter to the USA. In his opinion, silver exports have in fact declined because of economic slowdown plaguing European nations and the US.

Indian consumer market for silver is growing year on year and 70 per cent of the increase in demand is driven by innovation in design, says Mehta. According to a Thomson Reuters GFMS report, in 2014, world silver jewellery demand grew a staggering 47 per cent to 215.2 million oz (6,693 tonnes) thanks to strong performance in India.

Trend alerts

Silver jewellery has a lot of potential for growth and Indian companies are alive to it. As far as overseas markets go, sterling silver ornaments have eaten into a substantial share of white gold jewellery, especially in USA and Europe. India's hand-made sterling silver jewellery, also





Images courtesy: Silver Emporium

competitively priced because of low-cost crafting (at least 30-40 per cent lower), has given the country a competitive edge over many other countries where silver jewellery is machine-made.

Alert to New Age design demands, much of this jewellery is also adapted from traditional styles and modified to suit the Western wearer. "The market abroad has become very receptive to India's silver ornaments. It is even rivalling its more well-established counterparts like gold and platinum," asserts Varkey.

In India, traditional fixation with gold, especially in South India, has diluted and many chain stores have opened exclusive boutiques to cash in on the new love for silver. Leading Western India jeweller P N Gadgil Jewellers has also forayed into silver jewellery designed by couturier Tarun Tahiliani.

Today, silver jewellery stands above the clutter of gold and diamonds. There is also plenty of experimentation because of the metal's high workability factor. Designs use gemstones and diamonds and various forms. "There is plenty of opportunity in diamond-studded silver jewellery. Silver Emporium, for instance, incorporates the latest trends in its various theme-based collections," says Mehta.

Jewel Ace International's silver jewellery studded with reasonable quality diamonds is also popular as is its coloured stone-studded silver jewellery. And although it is its enamel work silver jewellery that is the bestseller, the jewellery house regularly updates its collections to keep pace with the changing times. "Recently, we introduced the Virtuous Woman collection," informs Varkey, adding, "It is our expressive and trendy designs that have made us so popular."

Leo Silver Art's sophisticated collection of cufflinks, belt buckles, kurta buttons and so on are also doing very well. "Silver jewellery studded with semi-precious stones is very popular. We constantly update our collections to keep pace with the times," adds Punamiya.



Image courtesy: Jewel Ace International

Image courtesy: Silver Emporium



Introducing and updating existing collections according to the season is very important for ACPL Jewels Pvt. Ltd. “We incorporate changes in the fashion scene so that our customers stay ahead of the trends,” says Gupta.

Quality standards

Dominated by unorganised players, the silver sector had so far put investment in technology on the backburner. It is only in the last few years that efforts were made to bridge the lacunae and investment worth crores (according to industry estimates) have been made in technology upgrade. Today, India has world-class technology and labour cost advantage which is giving manufacturing the much-needed boost. The finish of jewellery is finer, volumes are growing and orders are flowing in.

Jewellers have figured out that best-in-class manufacturing quality is the only way forward. Strict quality checks and consistent technical upgrade is, therefore, imperative. “Even a unique design can fall flat if the quality is not at par with global standards. So, processes have to be in place to ensure that there is no compromise on quality,” feels Mehta.

Staying ahead in terms of technology is also central to surviving in the market. “Adaptation to new technology is an ongoing process. Silver Emporium constantly upgrades its manufacturing capabilities. Ultimately,

it is consistent quality, design and customer satisfaction that conquers the market,” Mehta adds.

In response to new-age consumer requirements, Leo Silver Art ensures that its jewellery is nickel-free, with no harmful effects on health. “Our designs are excellent, using the latest innovations in technology. Most importantly, our jewellery is made of nickel-free silver. This is a quality assurance and makes us stand out from the crowd,” says Punamiya.

Alive to the significance of technology upgrade, Jewel Ace has already incorporated the latest German technology of e-coating silver products to make it more resistant to tarnish. “Now, plans are on the anvil to introduce nano coating. This will make our silver even more resistant to tarnish,” Varkey says with pride.

Jewel Ace International, in fact, has a highly organised production process. It has step-by-step quality checks and efficient QC teams to ensure that all its products adhere to ISI standards and are of best quality, finish and design.

“Our enamel work has a distinct appeal and coupled with excellent quality and service, we have become a trusted brand,” he says.

Today, prospects are bright for the silver sector. Jewellers have hit on the right mix of design, innovation and quality and are now aspiring to sell the metal like gold. The way to grow their base and stir up more interest is constant innovation and promotion at international and domestic jewellery shows. ■



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The internet of JEWELLERY

Until recently, jewellery only had to be beautiful; its lack of utility was besides the point. Today, however, a slew of wearable devices have begun to compete with traditional jewels for space on the body and jewellers have had to step in with smart jewellery that marry style with digital-age sensibility. **Shaudhan Desai** gives an overview of this next big thing in the jewellery market.



Image courtesy: Swarovski Shine



SHAUDHAN DESAI

is a technology expert with a focus on the gems and jewellery sector. He is the CEO of D'Soft Infotech Pvt. Ltd.

In today's competitive environment, jewellery has become a synonym for innovation. In an era where the mantras are Dil Maange More and Aur dikhao, Aur dikhao, the jeweller needs to keep on innovating to satisfy the never-ending consumer demand for the new and the novel.

Design innovation has been a prime focus of all jewellers and that is precisely why newer designs keep flooding the market every day.

Today, to add to the many innovations, a new option known as wearable technology has also become a rage. We know about wearable technology in the form of the Apple watch or Google Glass or Nike shoes with iPhone app or a pen with a camera. The technology is nothing new; but, then smart jewellery with wearable technology is definitely a new concept which jewellers would love to know more about.



she is also likely miss out on important ones.

To solve this problem London-based Kovert Designs has come up with a smart stone made from zirconia ceramics, which connects to an iPhone via Bluetooth Smart.

The stone is made available as part of 18 kinds of jewellery such as rings, pendants, bracelets and more. What it does is very simple. It vibrates as soon as there is an important notification; so, a woman does not need to keep checking her phone every now and then. The iPhone app, which is designed to work with this stone, helps the person to decide which type of notifications should be passed on to her jewellery.

Thus, a social-network and technology-savvy woman can focus on her current interests and assignments without missing important notifications on her iPhone kept in her handbag.

Future trends

Miragii, a fashion tech startup, has recently launched a campaign to get its smart pendant mass produced and in the hands of fashion-forward, tech-savvy women. The company has launched its project on kickstarter.com and if it gets a backing of \$75,000, it will launch even a Miragii Smart Necklace with Projector Technology!

The ceramic-based necklace has a micro projector that

Smart jewellery for the fitnesssavvy

Urban women are nowadays growing more and more conscious about fitness and weight-control. However, since women prefer to wear accessories that have ornamental value, the plain wearable technology devices that are mostly rubber, do not appeal much to them. So, Swarovski has stepped in and come up with beautiful jewellery in partnership with Misfit, a company that manufactures wearable tracking devices.

Swarovski Misfit Shine is a collection of jewellery that has been crafted around Misfit's most popular product for tracking physical activities. By wearing jewellery from the collection, a woman can wear her fitness tracker without compromising on an elegant look throughout the day.

The collection provides several wearable options of jewellery that keep track of physical activities like steps, running, swimming, walking, cycling, tennis, basketball and also sleep. The jewellery also displays calories burnt during such activities and lets the wearer decide what she should have for lunch or dinner!

Smart jewellery for the tech-savvy

A woman who is connected to the outside world via mail, Whatsapp, Facebook and other apps on her smartphone receives notifications every moment. The problem is that once she hears a beep on the smartphone, she can hardly resist checking on it. On the other hand, if she mutes notifications,

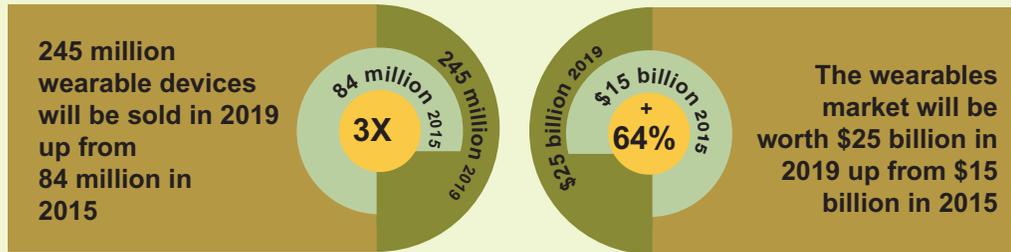


All images in this page courtesy: Kovert Designs

CCS Insight Global Wearables Forecast, 2015-2019

Volume (million units)

Value (billion \$)



In **2015**, **China** will overtake the **US** to become the world's biggest **fitness tracker** market

Smartwatches will deliver **61%** of wearables market revenue in **2015**



Fitness and activity trackers will account for more than **50%** of the unit sales in 2019

August 2015



Smartwatches will account for **almost half** of wearables revenue in **2019**

- Fitness and activity trackers
- Wearable cameras
- Virtual reality headsets
- Augmented reality headsets
- Smartwatches and other smartphone companions

actually projects text messages onto your hand. Not only that, a hidden Bluetooth earpiece also allows a person to take a phone call without pulling out her smartphone.

Miragii also offers gesture control. Over and above projecting a text message or the information of an incoming call onto your hand, you can also “wave away” the text or call with a gesture.

Market of wearable devices

According to Statista.com (the statistical portal), global wearables market is expected to reach a value of US\$ 19 billion in 2018. In 2015, the biggest sellers are Fitbit and Apple who are selling around 4.4 million and 3.6 million devices a quarter respectively. According to a prediction by CCS Insight, an industry analysis firm, 84 million devices in total will have been sold by the end of 2015. By 2019, CCS expects markets to grow three times, which means that 245 million devices are expected to sell. One thing for sure is that going forward, the younger generation will embrace wearable tech options quickly. Now, if jewellers can design jewellery in such a way that wearable devices can be fitted in more than one piece of jewellery bought by the same customer, it can open up a new market.

How?

Simple. Going by the predications, 50 per cent of the 245 million devices that are expected to be sold will be fitness and activity trackers of one type or the other. This means that if more and more smart jewellery options are developed around fitness and activity trackers in such a way that the same activity tracker can be placed around various jewellery options such as pendants, bracelets, rings and more, it can help jewellers attract the young — a consumer segment that expectedly will have better disposable incomes.

Would you be ready to offer new wearable technology jewels to your clients? It is time to prime up and explore options in this regard as you will find a big market for this in India in the coming years. ■

(If you liked the article and want to know more, please SMS or WhatsApp “wearable” on 09328007914. You can also reach me on shaudhan@ornatesoftware.com)

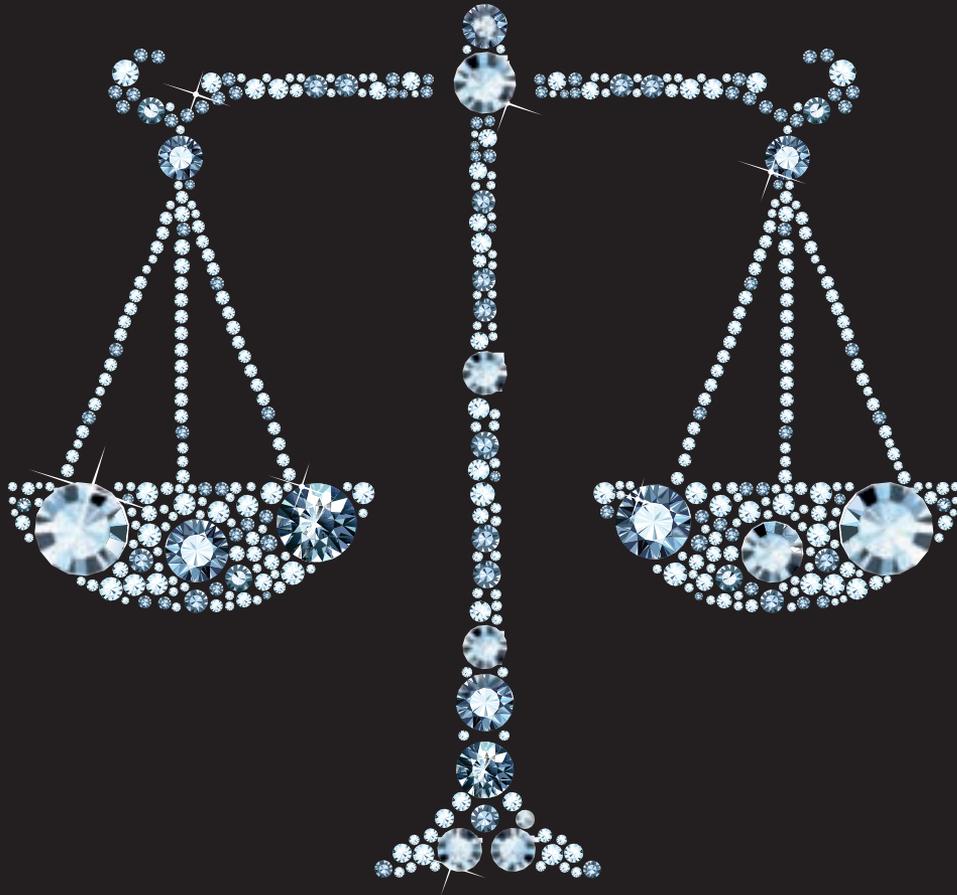
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Weighty issues

Accurate measurement of gems and jewellery is vital since any error in weight can lead to a distorted perception of the industry. Today, with the organised market gaining in share and visibility, it is imperative that jewellers and gems traders are acquainted with the legal aspects of weights and measurements. **Alifya Huseni** highlights the rules that are applicable to the industry in Maharashtra, a leading centre of the trade.

The gems and jewellery sector is a major export-earner and contributes approximately six-seven per cent of the country's GDP. Currently, established brands are acting as a beacon for growth of the organised market and going forward, growth in the industry will be manifest in the presence of many more large retailers and brands besides a greater variety in terms of products and designs.

Gems are precious and expensive and need to be handled with utmost caution. Since any error in their measurement and weight can cause gross misrepresentation and considerable financial prejudice, regulatory standards assume great significance. Until 1976, the Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1976, a central legislation, governed measurements and measuring instruments used in the jewellery industry, which was later replaced by the Legal Metrology Act in 2009.

The 2009 Act regulates trade and commerce in weights, measures, packaged commodities and other goods which are sold or distributed by weight, measure or number and for matters connected with or incidental to these. It lays down the minimum quality standards and disclosure requirements which a manufacturer/dealer/importer of weights and measures/packaged commodity needs to follow.

In the gems and jewellery industry, the users of weights and measures are jewellers and traders (as opposed to manufacturers/dealers/importers of weights and measures) and it is to them that the Act predominantly applies. Today, in the backdrop of an increase in organised players or retailers, primary knowledge of some significant rules of the Act and the implications that it has for a gems and jewellery company, has become essential.

In India, the Department of Consumer Affairs under the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution takes care of legal metrology. The Legal Metrology Act, 2009 was enacted as a model to be adopted by each state government, with or without modification. A few state governments have enacted their own Act for regulating matters connected with legal metrology; others have modified the Central Act with suitable rules. The Act has limited scope vis-à-vis the gems and jewellery industry since the latter usually deals in unpackaged goods and therefore supplementary rules are framed by states for the purpose of regulation.



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In Maharashtra, Rule 4 and Rule 21 of the Maharashtra Legal Metrology (Enforcement) Rules, 2011 are applicable to the jewellery industry. While Rule 4 mostly elaborates on the use of bullion weight and carat weight, Rule 21 contains provisions relating to the use of weight or measure and so on.

Rule 4 states that:

- No weight other than a bullion weight specified under the Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011, will be used for transactions in bullion, including precious metals, pearls, ornaments or other articles made of gold, silver or platinum.
- No weight other than carat weight will be used for transactions in precious stones.
- In any transaction only beam scale of class A or class B category or a non-automatic weighing instrument of special accuracy class (class I) or high accuracy class (class II) can be used.
- The Controller has the authority to issue instructions or directions or orders for use of specific type of weight or measure in any trade.

Rule 21 states that:

- Any individual using a beam scale in any transaction in his premises will have to suspend the same from a stand or attach it to a chain by a hook. Itinerant vendors have, however, been kept out of the purview of this requirement.
- Every weight or measure would have to be used in a clean condition and with proper lighting. Further, the weighing instrument should be placed in such a way that the process of weighing is clearly visible to the consumer.
- Any weight or measure, which has been verified, stamped and sealed in situ (meaning on site or in position) cannot be dismantled and removed from its original site without prior intimation to the Controller or any other person authorised by him.
- The user will have to keep verified and stamped weights equal to one-tenth of the capacity of the instrument or 1,000 kilogram, whichever is less, at the site of each weighing instrument. This is to ensure proper check of the accuracy of a weighing instrument.



- Every day the user will have to check the weighing instrument with these weights to ensure that the weighing is correct. In case any error exceeds permissible limits, the jeweller will have to stop the use of the weighing instrument and inform the concerned Legal Metrology Department.
- Consumers also have the right to check the accuracy of the weight or measure with the weight or measure referred to in the sub-rules.

According to the Act, a jewellery company is required to nominate a person who will be responsible for the conduct of the company and also communicate it to the Director of Legal Metrology or the concerned Controller.

In case there are any violations, the nominated person and the company will be held responsible.

In the absence of any such nomination, the person who is in charge or responsible to the company will be held responsible.

In addition to this, any other person responsible to the company and due to whose consent or negligence offences were committed will also be held liable.

If a company is convicted, the Court may direct it to publish its name and the offence committed by it in the newspapers at its own cost. ■

(The views given above are that of the author and not necessarily that of the organisation they represent. Author can be contacted on alifya.huseni@astuteconsulting.com. While all care has been taken to ensure accuracy of the legal provisions and inferences drawn in the said article, readers are advised to examine the same in the light of their specific facts and take professional opinion. The author holds no responsibility to any person in this regard.)

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All images courtesy: Harilal Soni

Artistically ethnic



HARILAL SONI

is the president of
Kachhh Bullion
Federation

The wonder of *pachchikam* jewellery lies in the remembrance of a lost era. Its recent revival has brought to the fore a craft whose heritage dates back to the 18th and 19th centuries. **Harilal Soni** tells us about its origin, the craft and the beauty of the jewels.



times has been discovered at archaeological sites in both eastern and western Kachchh.) Highly-skilled *kaarigars* then added native motifs and methods, thereby creating an elaborate art and distinctive ornaments as well as artefacts. Having evolved over the decades, pachchikam in the present day is a beautiful marriage of the West and the East, singular and artistic.

Origin of word

There are many versions of the genesis of the word *pachchikam* or *panchchkam* as it is sometimes known as. The most popular is that it comes from the word *pachchigar* or goldsmith. Many also believe it originated from *panch* meaning five fingers, alluding to the fact that the jewellery is handcrafted.



Having evolved over the decades pachchikam today is a beautiful marriage of the East and the West.

In reviving *pachchikam* we will have revived a lost era. A part of the revival-of-the-vintage movement happening in fashion and design today, *pachchikam* is fast filling the vacuum that existed in the realm of classy, ethnic Indian jewellery. The jewels are exclusive, they are handmade and, most significantly, also affordable.

Today, contemporary designers and jewellers are innovating with the craft that flourished in the Kachchh region of Gujarat centuries ago. Although its origin is not precisely known, there is evidence of its affinity to the kind of jewellery worn by European nobility in the 16th century.

It is believed that jewellers in the Kachchh region, patronised by the royal family, absorbed Western influences that reached the shores of India during trade and commerce exchanges. (Interestingly, jewellery dating back to Harappan

The craft

Pachchikam designs can be easily distinguished from Jaipur and Tadtar jewellery. Since it is handcrafted, the finish is inferior. It is also more fragile. Silver, the base metal and the reason why it is affordable, is used to make this jewellery mainly because of two reasons — one, silver is very malleable and two, because it closely resembles platinum, the metal that was used in Europe and from where the craft supposedly first drew inspiration. (There is also the hypothesis that the jewellery was initially crafted in gold and it was only much later that it was replaced by silver — when financially strapped nobles thought it would be within their means.)

Handcrafted artistically with small balls called *rach* and rope tars known as *veni*, the crafting process is complicated and unlike *kundan* and *jadau*. The design is first drawn with a pencil after which tar is poured



inside the design case. Using traditional tools such as *khilas* and *kalam*s every millimetre of silver is pressed in, which take days and sometimes months too. Uncut semiprecious and glass stones — mostly green, red, blue and white glass with white rice pearls — are then inserted into the silver case and the edges pressed onto the stone with the finger and the grooves filled on it. The process is akin to simulated open claw workmanship. The way the base is pressed over the gems makes *pachchikam* jewellery appear rougher than European jewellery.

The jewellery may lack finesse but the charm of the jewels lies in this very aesthetic. The fact that machinery is not used at all also means that workmanship is time-consuming and laborious. Sometimes all the processes need to be repeated to get a perfect ornament or objet d' art. *Pachchikam* needs patience and skill and a single jewel could take months to complete.



Pachchikam designs can be easily distinguished from Jaipur and Tadtar jewellery.

Current scenario

Pachchikam jewellery looks gorgeous and can be worn on formal occasions. It is believed that the neck and hand pieces have acupressure properties while the *kambi* and *kadla* — weighing between 1,000 and 2,000 grams — worn on the legs by the Ahir and Rabari communities are considered useful in treating gynaecological diseases. The jewellery is faithful to traditional forms and motifs and therefore most of them still look like antique pieces from a romantic era.

Today, much of the jewellery is made in silver and then gold-plated to give it the appearance of real gold jewellery. *Pachchikam* jewellery in gold is known as *rach rava* and has diverse and specific designs for necklaces, bangles and anklets. Designers influenced by their style are making changes to match trends and the resurgence in demand. Jewellers such as Harilal Lakhamsi, P G Zaveri and others are also modifying them for consumers, primarily as far as weight is concerned, since most of them are too heavy for the new age.

The number of *pachchikam* specialist *karigaars* has declined and today most of them are concentrated in Anjar, Bhuj, Bhacahu and Rapar. Hailing from families where knowledge of the craft has been handed down through generations, they are fiercely protective, fearing that the craft might be lost if new techniques are adopted.

The enthusiasm of some designers and jewellers has, however, managed to convince them of the former's integrity and genuine interest in popularising *pachchikam* across the world. This is encouraging experiments with designs, styles and forms.

Pachchikam jewellery is almost as old as the history of Kachchh. It is traditional designer jewellery that has a winning combination — it handcrafted, it is exclusive and at the same time moderately priced. Today, its revival has also sparked an interest from the West for export. *Pachchikam* seems set for shining days ahead. ■



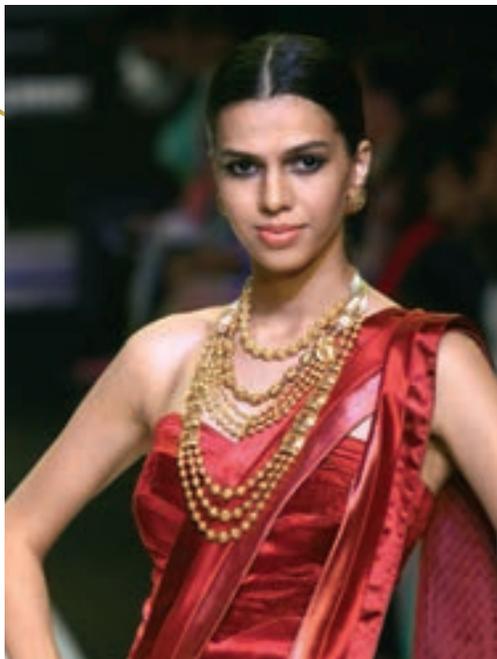
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▲ Tanishq



For the bride

Sparkling diamonds, glittering gold and gorgeous gemstones...a look at some of the exquisite bridal jewellery that was showcased at IIJS 2015

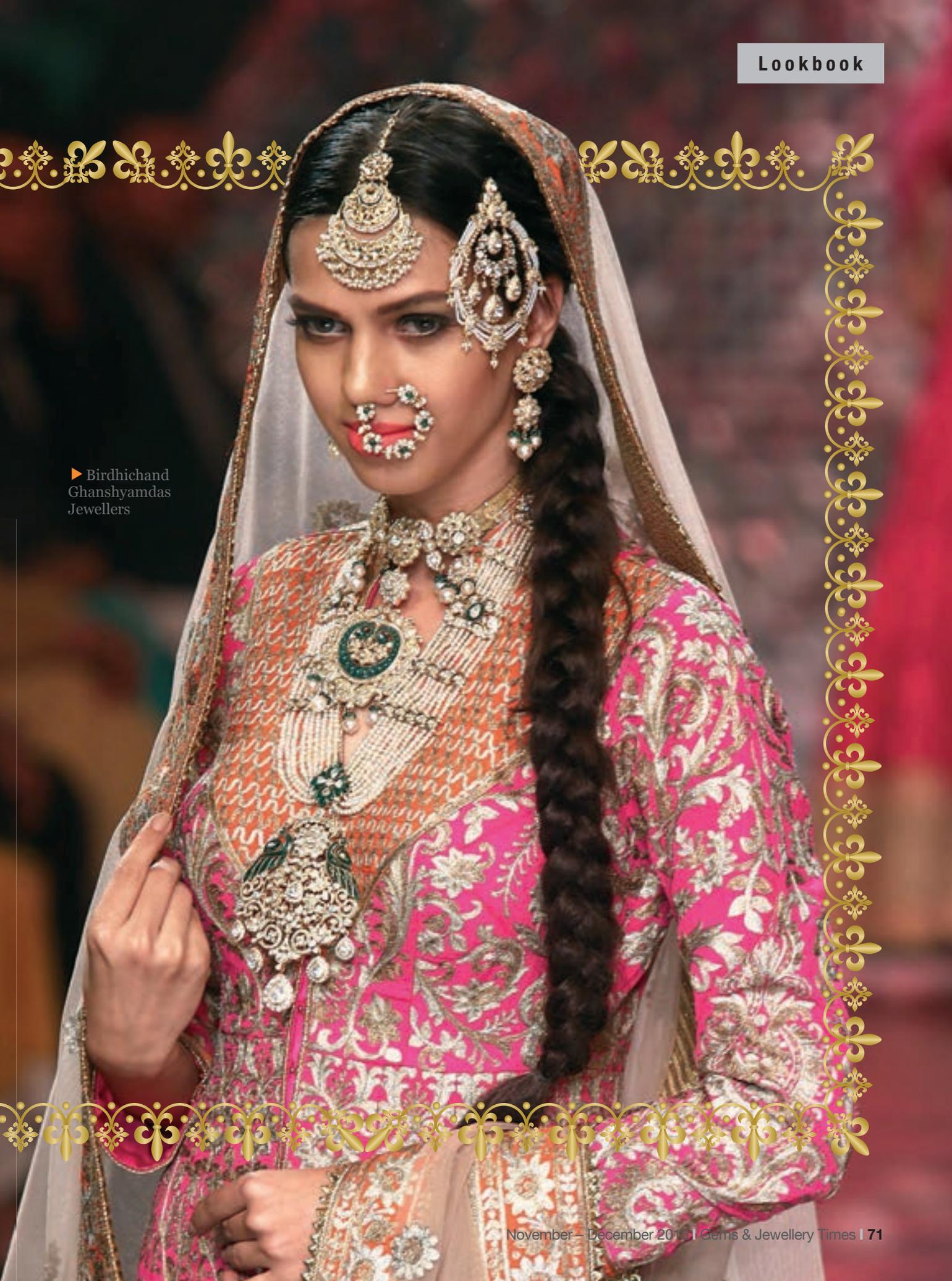


▲ Shobha Shringar



▶ Yoube Jewellery

► Birdhichand
Ghanshyamdas
Jewellers





▲ Malca Amit Jk



▲ Varuna D Jani

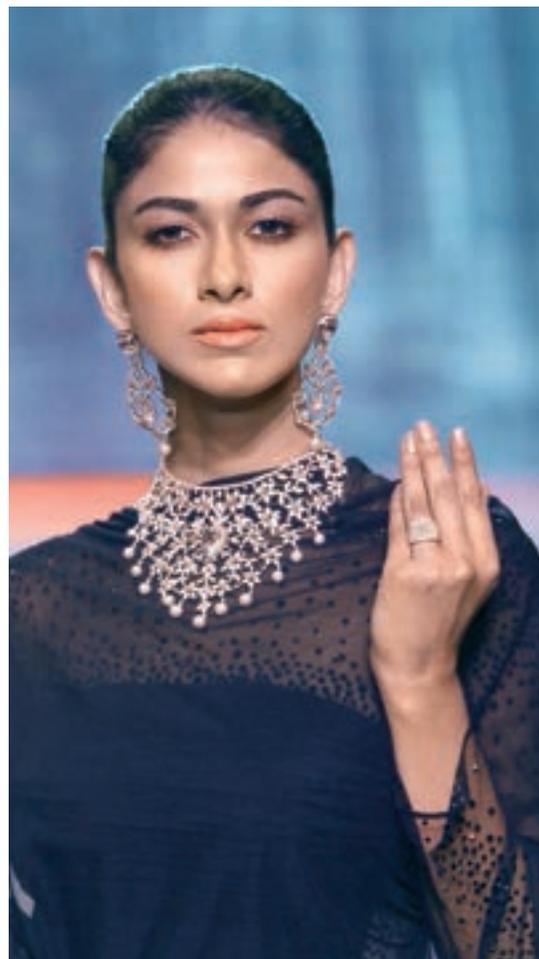
► GDK Jewels



▼ Monica Kapur



▲ AAKS Jewels

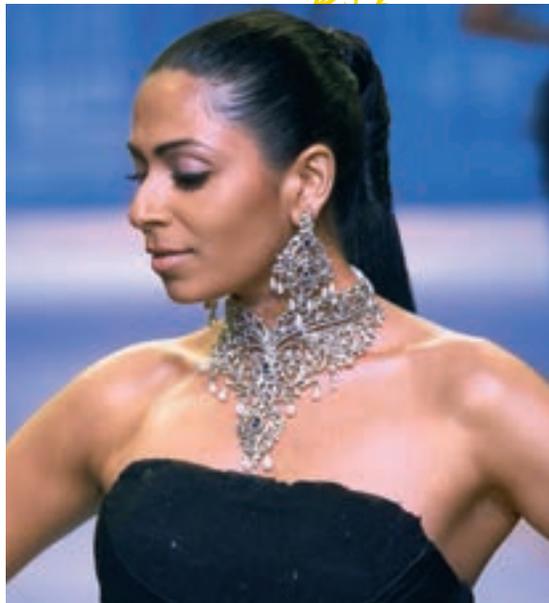


▲ Yoube Jewellery



▲ Anand Shah

▼ Yoube Jewellery



▲ Tanishq

► Shobha Shringar





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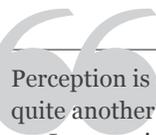
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Clearing all doubts

The gems and jewellery industry has, over the last decade, seen considerable increase in the share of the organised sector. Despite this and because of the larger fragmented part, the industry is still perceived as opaque. In this edition, two young Turks tell us how the industry can increase transparency and enhance its image.



**PREMAL
JHAVERI**
Director
Jhaveri's



Perception is one thing, ground reality is quite another.

In my opinion, customers are the “Mai Baap” of the retail sector. Not only do they have a hawk-like ability to spot a good deal, they are a lot more knowledgeable than we generally think they are. Today, customers invariably do their homework and check out several retail stores before buying. Consequently, they are more aware of prevailing market prices. Further, nowadays the price of gold is published daily in newspapers, telecast on news channels and available at a click on the internet. Even stores display prices. As a result, customers are a lot smarter about timing their purchases.

At another level, the development of the organised sector has greatly improved the level of transparency in the jewellery business. With increasing certification of jewellery by laboratories, customers are reassured about a diamond's quality, clarity and carat measure. Diamond criteria charts are on display in most retail outlets — so, customers know exactly what they are getting. No doubt, the level of transparency is different in different cities. There is also a difference between transparency in metros and in tier 2 and tier 3 cities. But, across the board things are changing for the better.

The flip side to this is that all marks of purity are not the same. In several cases, the purity of goods is wrongly marked and

sold at higher prices. This is damaging the credibility of the industry. This opaque system needs to go.

I strongly feel that hallmarking of plain gold jewellery should be made mandatory. This will lead to healthy competition, ethical business practices and a general restoration of the industry's credibility and reputation. There is a challenge, however. Hallmarking centres are not available in all cities. Consequently, transportation of goods from one city to another is time-consuming, costly and carries a risk of loss in transit.

In order to enhance the image of the jewellery industry, customers should be made more aware of the purity of gold through advertising across multiple media — radio, television, newspapers, magazines and even in-shop advertising.

As the number of jewellery retailers continues to grow and several stores appear, often one adjacent to another in crowded jewellery markets, the forces of competition will reduce levels of malpractice in the trade. Retailers who do not adopt higher levels of transparency and ethical practices will surely miss the bus.

The jewellery market is competitive. Nevertheless, there is still room for everyone. Each store has its own loyal clientele for specific goods that are its speciality. With increasing transparency and the adoption of best practices, this market will only grow.





VIRAJ THADESWAR

Director
Shringar House of
Mangalsutra

Notwithstanding a rise in gold prices, the jewellery industry has been witnessing growth year after year. True, there are severe fluctuations with a few good months and some bad months in terms of business, but by and large the industry is developing. More importantly, it is rapidly getting organised. As a matter of fact, the current level of penetration of organised retail is approximately 20 per cent. The industry is providing high quality products in term of design, finish and purity. Not only retailers but manufacturers and wholesalers as well are updating themselves on the latest trends and the best business practices.

As a result of all this, the perception of opaqueness is gradually reducing. Organised and corporate retail provides maximum transparency and have thereby gained the confidence of customers. Today, customers are more comfortable dealing with chain stores and this segment is also growing.

However, we still have a long way to go. A major part of the industry is still fragmented and most customers, especially in semi-urban

and rural areas, interact with this fragmented sector. Also, due to import restrictions on gold, an unofficial supply system thrives in these areas, adding to complexities.

In order to keep pace with the momentum of growth and changing expectations of customers, it is imperative that this sector also provides transparency. Policies should be framed so that the unofficial supply system is squeezed out. There should be better internal processes such as documentation and RFID-based inventory. The industry also needs to ensure higher compliance in income-tax payments, particularly local and independent players. There should also be genuine sharing of information with authorities as this can go a long way in improving the industry's image. Know-your-customer norms and hallmarking will increase transparency. The future is also in online sales, which means increased transparency.

The gems and jewellery industry is getting highly competitive as old jewellers expand and newer companies get established. Evolution into a transparent industry is inevitable. ■

Gold and copper were the first metals to be discovered b humans around 5000 B.C. and are the only two non-white-coloured metals.

The chemical symbol for gold is Au, from the Latin word aurum meaning “shining dawn” and from Aurora, the Roman goddess of the dawn.

One cubic foot of gold weighs half a ton. The world's largest gold bar weighs 200 kg.
<http://facts.randomhistory.com>



Coral has also been called Bones of the Sea and Garden of the Sea.

<http://www.ephemerala.com>

Early Chinese myths told of pearls falling from the sky when dragons fought.

www.bernardine.com/gemstones/

Trivia



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When sapphires have a pinkish to pinkish-red hue they are called pink sapphire; but when the dominant hue becomes red they are called rubies.

Amethysts can fade if exposed to too much sun.

Radiation causes diamonds to turn green.

Tourmalines and quartz develop an electrical charge when heated and tourmaline jewellery attracts dust when displayed under hot lights.

<http://www.gottrocks.com> ■

LEARNING to be a CUT ABOVE



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The Indian Institute of Gems & Jewellery is one of the premier institutes for training and education in the gem and jewellery sector.

A non-profit educational project of the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), IIGJ has four branches in Delhi, Mumbai (Andheri and Tardeo) and Jaipur. The

institutes are also affiliated to the Gem & Jewellery Skill Council of India (GJSCI).

The institute aims to impart a high level of systematic education in jewellery design, gemmology and manufacturing so as to improve the quality of Indian jewellery and bring it at par with international standards.

Furthermore, it aims to increase the awareness of jewellery design concepts by taking Indian jewellery to the world and the world to India. The Indian Institute of Gems & Jewellery aims to create a professional and skilled talent pool for the burgeoning Indian jewellery sector.

Jewellery Design Foundation

The students are introduced to the creative planning of jewels in this comprehensive course. They start with basic sketching exercises to understand 3D imaging and then learn to transform their ideas into 3D drawings.

They also get acquainted with other rendering techniques. Introductory lectures on metallurgy and gemmology, the different shapes and types of settings, theory and designing of traditional Indian jewellery layouts

Both courses have been developed such that it rounds off students' education in diamonds and coloured stones to make them professionals in gemmology. The two courses can be availed individually or as a comprehensive Diploma in Gemology.

Duration: 6 months

Place: Delhi

Fees: ₹ 70,000

Jewellery Technology Diploma

Converting your ideas into real products is an art and this course focuses on the basic manufacturing skills that unite creative designing and technical interpretation. Awareness about the latest trends and technological



and detailing, technical drawings, drawing precious stones and graphic presentation of ideas are imparted through the lectures.

These techniques are then explained, applied and tested in projects. This is done to understand and gauge each student's creativity and skill. Visits to museums and galleries form an important part of the programme and prove to be vital founts of inspiration and education.

Duration: 10 weeks (50 lectures)

Place: Delhi

Fees: ₹ 30,000

Diploma in Gemology

Gemmology is the science, art and profession of identifying and evaluating gemstones and diamonds. It is designed to open doors to the vast subject of gemstones and is divided into two courses – Diamonds and Diamond Grading and Coloured Gemstone Identification.

developments in the jewellery sector helps students to convert their designs into standout jewellery pieces.

The course starts with an introduction into basic manufacturing techniques and towards the end students are able to tackle the complexities of jewellery manufacturing at different stages.

The course is divided into different modules. It begins with basic exercises like sawing, smithing, alloying, soldering, drilling and filing, and are followed by advanced techniques like enamelling, lock and movement making, casting, wax carving, polishing and other surface treatments.

During the course students are taken for a study tour to show them the latest technology being used in industrial units to increase their awareness in the field. ■

Duration: 1 year (full time)

Place: Delhi

Fees: ₹ 1,00,000

AS GOOD AS **Gold**

With the government trying to make gold an integral part of the larger financial system, the NCDEX has taken several pioneering measures to enhance trading transparency and efficiency in the pricing of gold.

Niraj Shukla details the products that will help the jewellery industry improve its efficiency.





NIRAJ SHUKLA is the Assistant Vice President, Knowledge Management, NCDEX

The long-awaited gold schemes — Gold Monetization Scheme and Sovereign Gold Bonds Scheme — announced by the Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in the 2015-16 Budget was launched by the Prime Minister recently.

Formulated with the objective of monetising India’s private gold holdings and discouraging gold imports, these schemes are expected not only to ease the country’s trade balance but also convert gold into a productive asset for Indian citizens.

Private holding of gold in India is estimated at 20,000-25,000 tonnes and these schemes will provide an opportunity to Indian households to use their gold reserves to earn interest on them like any other financial instrument.

Despite the introduction of a variety of measures to reduce the Current Account Deficit (CAD) during last couple of years (increase in import duties from four to 10 per cent, 80:20 quota for imports, restrictions on gold related lending and coin sales), India still imports around 900 tonnes of gold every year.

In FY 2014-15, 930 tonnes of the yellow metal was imported and in FY 2015-16 it is

expected to be in the range of 900-1000 tonnes.

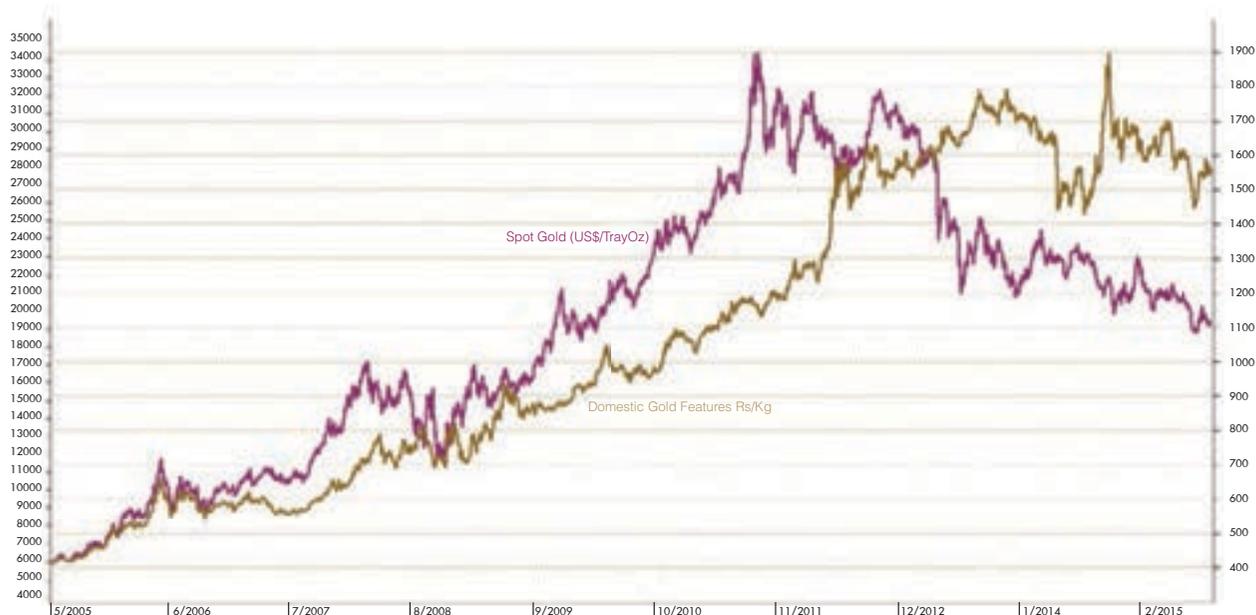
Various government interventions and restrictions have distorted the rupee price of gold, resulting in drastic decoupling of the domestic market from the international market. The correlation between the two distorted post 2013, when restrictions were imposed to curb imports in order to tackle the balance of payments situation.

Today, however, the government is trying to make gold an integral part of the larger financial system and leading this revolutionary process from the front is NCDEX, India’s largest platform for spot and futures trading. The NCDEX has not only taken several pioneering measures to enhance trading transparency and efficiency in the pricing of gold but also in promoting the government’s Make in India campaign. Its innovative gold products for domestic traders and investors include:

- Gold Hedge
- NC Gold
- Gold Now

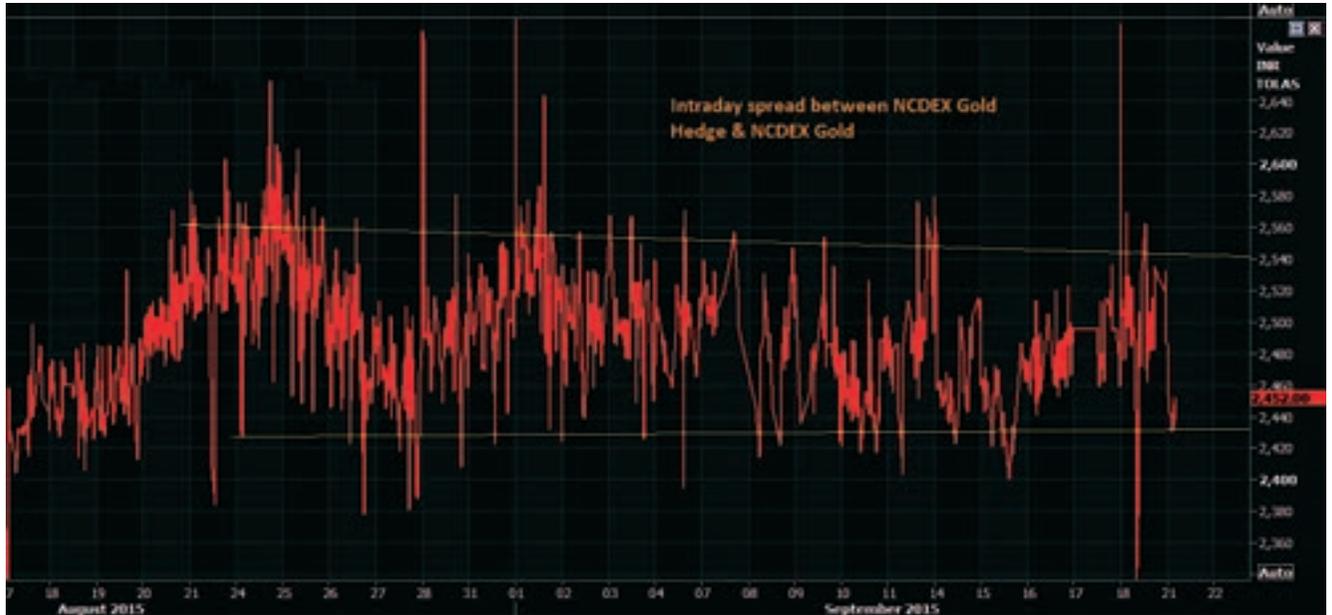
Various government restrictions have distorted the rupee price of gold, resulting in drastic decoupling of the domestic market from the international market.

Chart 1: International Spot Gold Prices vs Indian Domestic Gold Prices



(Source: Thomson Reuters, NCDEX)

Chart 2: Intraday spread between NCDEX



(Source: Thomson Reuters, NCDEX)

Perfect hedging solution

Many a time domestic events or change in policies tend to distort prices of gold and thereby reduce the efficiency of gold hedging for traders and investors. As is evident in Chart 2, the spread between gold and gold hedge on an average fluctuates by ₹100-120.

Gold Hedge is a bid to change this and attract bullion hedges. A contract that mimics international prices without considering other charges such as customs duty, local taxes and premiums, it provides a transparent form

of price discovery and the perfect hedging platform for domestic physical market players. Domestic traders can now expect close to 100 per cent correlation with international gold.

Increased transparency in gold pricing

India remains a price taker of international markets when it comes to gold. Domestic price is derived from international price, rupee-dollar exchange rate, Customs duty and local premium. Information on all factors except domestic premium is available in the public domain. Domestic premium, however, is a black box for Indian traders and investors. In this case, not only is premium information limited to a handful of importers and traders, it also fluctuates on an intra-day basis, day-to-day basis as well as in different markets spread across the country. Also, the calculation of final settlement price (FSP) is based on 100 per cent spot price polling at the delivery centre and market participants have no mechanism to verify or back test the components of spot price.

NC Gold addresses these anomalies by making public the domestic premium charged. It is a transparent mechanism of disseminating polled premium publicly which can be accessed on the NCDEX website.

The FSP of NCGOLD is calculated based on closing international gold prices on the day of expiry, RBI reference rate, prevailing

Chart 3: Historical daily polled premium-discount for gold



Figures are in US\$
Source: NCDEX



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Customs duties and polled premium/ discount. The transparency and simplicity in FSP calculation and polled premium/ discount makes NCGOLD the best available transparent price of gold in the country.

Nationwide uniform spot market

The gold market is highly fragmented in India. Thus, bulk of the local trade in gold is of a bilateral nature, without efficient price discovery and counter-party risk management. India’s heavy dependence on imported gold to fulfil its domestic demand and inability to harness domestic supply also adds to price risks. The operations of Indian gold refineries are based on gold dore bars imported mainly from Africa and Latin America as well as scrap gold supplies in the domestic market. Almost 400 tonnes of scrap gold enters the system every year but they are not considered as ‘good delivery’ since the country does not have a common standard for gold.

Also, since domestic gold refineries (except for MMTTC-PAMP) do not enjoy the same status as London Bullion Market Association (LBMA) accredited refineries, it hampers their growth prospects.

The NCDEX’s unique solution to these problems has been another innovative product called Gold Now. Gold Now is India’s first gold forwards that allows “good delivery

gold” to be delivered at the NCDEX platform, thus facilitating development of domestic gold refineries and encouraging domestic supply of gold. Gold Now also offers incentives for recycle of gold. “Gold Now – India Gold” facilitates trading and price discovery for domestically refined gold. In order to ensure quality specifications and benchmark gold produced from local refineries, NCDEX has also put in place a stringent refinery accreditation procedure that will help in setting up globally comparable standards for Indian refineries.

Conclusion

NCDEX’s basket of bullion products provides a transparent, vendor neutral, regulated and online market with real-time access to benchmark prices for the domestic market. They are helping domestic players with the perfect hedging tool for gold and a much needed transparent pricing mechanism. They are also encouraging the supply of local gold refined from gold scrap recycling. This is in perfect sync with Make in India since gold scrap recycling will give a boost to the local refining industry. Annual scrap recycling of 1.8 per cent (400-450 tonnes) could reduce gold official imports by half in a year. Accreditation of local gold refineries through a state-of-art audit procedure would help set an Indian Standard for Gold. ■



TIMELESS APPEAL

Trident Corporation has launched traditional and temple design *mangalsutras* in 24kt gold. Enhanced with temple-inspired motifs and studded with black stones, coloured diamonds and pearls, the *mangalsutras* have a timeless appeal that a woman will cherish all her life.

INNOVATION WITH A CAUSE

ORRA, India's finest jewellery retail chain, has with the help of the National Association for the Blind, launched a collection that is a tribute to the visually-impaired. The collection called Mantrasiddhi features 10 exquisitely crafted pendants in 18kt gold and platinum, embellished with precious stones with the mantra Om delicately etched in Braille. The pendants are in the form of Ganesha, Krishna, Shiva and Surya.

The collection is a one-of-a-kind creation, never attempted by any jeweller earlier. The idea of etching the Braille Om came to the company head designer as she drove by the National Association for the Blind (NAB) office every day on way to work. The concept is to give the visually challenged a piece of jewellery that is not just spiritual but something they can connect to at a personal level.

In addition to the collection is a special video that beautifully weaves the story of the lives of four kids who did not let their lack of sight affect their vision in life. According to Vijay Jain, CEO, ORRA, "The mantras have a great significance. They help us build a special spiritual bond with God and it is this ideology that is taken forward in the collection." It is now available across ORRA's stores and on its website www.orra.co.in.



CREATIVE VISIONS

Continuing to advance its range of zirconia products, **Swarovski** has launched three new cuts for the 2015-16 season — the technically and optically classic Swarovski Zirconia 120 Facets, the precisely-formed rounded profile Swarovski Zirconia Puresse Cut and the aesthetically-balanced, five-sided Swarovski Zirconia Pentagon Cut. Also new to the Swarovski Zirconia line of products are two additional colours — Swarovski Zirconia Fancy Light Blue and Swarovski Zirconia Red Dark.

Swarovski has also launched two products that will provide its customers with even further possibilities for design and product development — the Marcasite Jewelchain that unites Swarovski Marcasite stones with 925 silver chains that allows for diversity in the creation of jewellery, watches and eyewear and the new Presetting Bezel Thin-Walled which are pre-set stones that can be clicked into place without the need for soldering or adhesives.

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IN THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

From a stunning earring and *haar* set whose highlight is oxidised gold filigree leaves surrounded by yellow gold work and a bunch of gold beads to a gold foliage embossed broad cuff with a ruby petalled flower at the centre and edged with pearls on either side of cuff line, the newest jewellery from **Solanki Jewellers** are masterpieces in design and craftsmanship.



FOR THE ROYAL LOOK

NAC Jewellers has launched its exquisite and magnificent Rudhramadevi collection. The jewellery is a series of handcrafted ornaments that captures the splendour and magnificence of a royal era. The collection has a wide range of intricately designed ornaments such as *haram*, earrings, double necklaces, bracelets, bangles and much more.

The highlight of the collection is the crafted hand bands that were worn during sword fights. The finest rubies, emeralds, *kundan* and uncut stones adorn the jewellery collection and it is for the first time in the history of South Indian cinema that original jewellery has been designed for a motion picture.

The jewellery line-up was created after extensive research on the style and grandeur of warrior queen Rudhramadevi. Each ornament in the luxurious collection has been inspired by original sculptures.





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