



For Immediate Release

Maharashtra CM Appeals To the Gem & Jewellery Trade To Adapt To The New Normal

Mumbai, April 9, 2021: The Chief Minister of Maharashtra Hon'ble Shri Uddhav Thackeray conducted a virtual meeting on 9th April, 2021, to review the requirements of the Indian gem and jewellery industry during the current period of restriction in the state.

Attending the meeting on behalf of the Maharashtra Government were Chief Secretary Shri. Sitaram Kunte, Health Minister Shri. Rajesh Tope, Principal Secretary of Relief & Rehabilitation Department Shri. Aseem Gupta, and Medical Education Minister Shri. Amit Deshmukh.

Representing the trade were GJEPC Chairman Shri. Colin Shah, GJEPC Vice Chairman Shri. Vipul Shah, Shri. Kirit Bhansali, Chairman Jewellery Park, Key members of the trade and GJEPC Executive Director Shri. Sabyasachi Ray among others.

During the meeting, Shri. Gupta clarified that as long as work could be carried out in shifts, gem and jewellery manufacturing and ancillary activities in the state would be exempted from emergency measures such as night curfew and restrictions on people's movement during the day, weekends, etc.

The State Government also clarified that current provisions allow BDB to open a Vaccination Centre and use of Rapid Antigen tests for workers, in case of logistical problems faced for conducting RT-PCR tests.

In his concluding remarks, Chief Minister Thackeray spoke of solutions to overcome the uncertainty surrounding the third and possibly fourth waves of COVID-19 infections sweeping across the world. Shri. Thackeray urged the trade to adapt to the "new normal" and move away from the 'peak-hour' concept and instead reorient to working in shifts, with only essential staff being called to the workplace, while other employees could continue working

from home. He also asked BDB to explore avenues to keep working staff members at the BDB itself in case of extreme situations.

Shri. Colin Shah requested the Chief Minister to consider a waiver on the double stamp duty paid by the diamond industry when seeking loans from banking consortiums. He also pointed out that none of the Nominated Agencies were importing gold into Mumbai as Maharashtra is the only state to impose stamp duty on gold imports. A waiver of stamp duty on gold imports into Mumbai would boost the state's revenues, he explained.

Shri. Colin Shah said, "I would like to thank Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra Uddhav Thackeray for giving a patient hearing to all our concerns and guiding us." In reply, Shri. Thackeray promised to look into the GJEPC Chairman's requests after a period of 10-15 days.

"I urge the Hon'ble CM to recognize Parichay Card issued by the Council to every worker/artisan in the industry by the Home Department of the Government of Maharashtra considering GJEPC has also linked an affordable Health insurance coverage and subsidies to the card that benefit the Karigars in the Sector. Parichay Card (Karigar) holders of GJEPC should be considered on priority by the Government for Affordable Housing Scheme of the state", Mr. Shah added

Other points represented and put forth by GJEPC included Waiver on Stamp duty on the Lease and Sub-lease Agreement of Jewellery Park along with Single Window Clearance Facility for the Jewellery Park

About The Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC)

The Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), set up by the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India (GoI) in 1966, is one of several Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) launched by the Indian Government, to boost the country's export thrust, when India's post-Independence economy began making forays in the international markets. Since 1998, the GJEPC has been granted autonomous status. The GJEPC is the apex body of gems & jewellery industry and today represents 7000 exporters in the sector. With headquarters in Mumbai, GJEPC has Regional Offices in New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Surat and Jaipur, all of which are major centres for the industry. It thus has a wide reach and is able to have a closer interaction with members to serve them in a direct and more meaningful manner. Over the past decades, GJEPC has emerged as one of the most active EPCs, and has continuously strived to both expand its reach and depth in its promotional activities as well as widen and increase services to its members.

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