



# SANJAY KOTHARI

Recipient of GJEPC's Lifetime Achievement Award 2020



GJEPCC DEDICATES THIS BOOK

IN HONOUR OF THE

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

AWARD WINNER

Sanjay Kothari



## GJEPC Committee of Administration (2020-2022)

### CHAIRMAN

Colin Shah

### VICE CHAIRMAN

Vipul Shah

### DIAMOND PANEL COMMITTEE

Sanjay Shah  
Manish Jiwani  
Dilip Shah  
Nilesh Kothari  
Ajesh Mehta  
Milan Chokshi  
Russell Mehta  
Sanju Kothari

### COLOURED GEMSTONES & PEARLS PANEL

Vijay Kedia  
Mahendra Agrawal

### GOLD JEWELLERY & OTHER PRECIOUS METAL JEWELLERY PANEL

K Srinivasan  
Mansukh Kothari  
Suvankar Sen  
Shailesh Sangani

### COSTUME FASHION, SALES TO FOREIGN TOURISTS, SYNTHETIC STONES PANEL

Badrinarayanan Gupta

### SILVER JEWELLERY PANEL

Ram Babu Gupta

### REGIONAL CHAIRMEN NORTHERN REGION

Ashok Seth

### EASTERN REGION

Prakash Chandra Pincha

### SOUTHERN REGION

Mahender Kumar Tayal

### WESTERN REGION

Ashok Gajera

### GUJARAT REGION

Dineshbhai Navadiya

### RAJASTHAN REGION

Nirmal Kumar Bardiya

### GOVERNMENT NOMINEE

Vipul Bansal, IAS, Jt. Secretary,  
Ministry of Commerce & Industry

The Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council, D2B, D-Tower,  
West Core Wing, Bharat Diamond Bourse, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E),  
Mumbai - 400 051, Maharashtra, India

Phone | +91 22-42263600 Toll-free number | 1800-103-4353

Missed call number | +91 7208048100

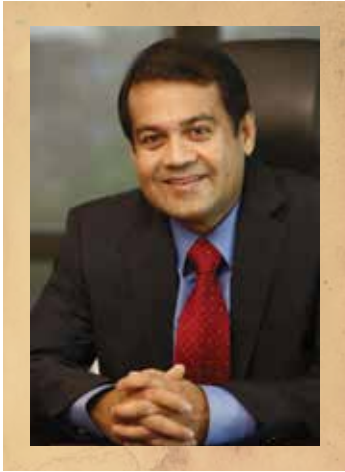
Website | [www.gjepc.org](http://www.gjepc.org)

Facebook | GJEPC

Twitter | GJEPCIndia

Instagram | gjepcindia





**COLIN SHAH**  
Chairman, GJEPC

Receiving GJEPC's coveted Lifetime Achievement Award speaks volumes about a person's determination and passion towards one's work.

A leader and guide to the industry, Sanjay Kothari has been the chairman and associated with GJEPC for many years and hence has been instrumental in bringing global recognition to the gem and jewellery industry. The India International Jewellery Show saw a transformation under his leadership. The other notable initiative by Sanjay Kothari was the launch of the India International Jewellery Week, which showcased extraordinary capabilities of Indian gem and jewellery manufacturers to the international audience.

Sanjay Kothari has dedicated his life working for the betterment of the diamond industry and he continues to inspire us through his work as chairman of GJNRF and GJSCI.

Many congratulations to him and I wish him a long and healthy life.



**VIPUL SHAH**  
Vice Chairman, GJEPC

Sanjay bhai Kothari is a visionary. He has been a guiding force, and I will cherish many heart-to-heart discussions we've had in the past about furthering the trade.

He has an exceptional quality of being an inclusive person and has inspired and empowered many people through the years, including the younger generation.

I've always known him to work for the good of the industry. With his sheer ingenuity, he was able to elevate IIJS and IIJW to an altogether different level. His sole mission has been to see the industry prosper, and not many have that kind of remarkable singular focus. He has also done exemplary work in raising funds through GJNRF, and now as Chairman of GJSCI, he is a driving force in grooming new talent and helping upskill artisans of India.

I congratulate him for a distinguished career.



MESSAGES

I have known Sanjay bhai ever since I joined the jewellery industry some two decades ago. He has been responsible in grooming me for the role in the Council. I have learned so much from him and his advice has helped me take right decisions. A dynamic personality, full of vigour, Sanjay bhai has tirelessly worked for the benefit of the industry. My heartiest congratulations to Sanjay bhai on this momentous occasion.



**MANSUKH KOTHARI**  
Convener, Events, GJEPC



**SABYASACHI RAY**  
Executive Director, GJEPC

Sanjay bhai is the doyen of the Indian gem & jewellery industry, a leader of the grassroots, who is honest to the core in everything that he does - as an industry man, as an owner, or as a boss. Above all, he is a lovely human being. His heart beats for all and sundry. I am lucky to have worked under him when he was Chairman and held posts in different capacities at the Council. Not just me, he has mentored a generation... a good number of us are indebted to him for that. He continues to contribute assiduously for the industry in different capacities and roles with the same energy, devotion, love, and spirit for people selflessly without caring for any awards or accolades. The Council is honoured today by getting the opportunity to bestow on him the Lifetime Achievement Award. Sanjay bhai thanks for being a guiding light to me and all of us.



# SANJAY KOTHARI - BORN TO LEAD

*Sanjay Kothari is a sum total of slivers that add a radiant aura to his personality, just as facets add sparkle to a diamond.*

*The three-time Chairman of GJEPC, Sanjay bhai, as he is fondly called by all, commands a groundswell of praise and respect from every quarter – be it his industry peers, friends, family, media, or even his office staff, some of whom have been working with him for 50 years.*

*A mentor to many, Sanjay bhai has been a model of rectitude.*

*A towering personality, Sanjay Kothari is the recipient of GJEPC's Lifetime Achievement Award 2022.*

**CHAIRMAN** April 2000-2004, 2006-2008

**CONVENER - EXHIBITIONS** February 1997-March 2000

**CONVENER - PMBD** 2010-2015



A multifaceted luminary, Sanjay Kothari has devoted more time and energy to the Council than any other office bearer. He has the distinction of being the longest-serving Chairman. With his charismatic personality and an innate ability to lead groups as a cohesive force, he has gained recognition for India as a global leader and strengthened the various developmental activities of the Council, including the India International Jewellery Show (IIJS). One of his key contributions to the IIJS has been to shift the show from a B2C to B2B model.

Sanjay Kothari's personality cannot be viewed through the lens of his career alone. It is difficult to encapsulate the spirit of a person who has touched so many lives in his professional and personal

capacity; or countless people whom he helped through charitable deeds.

## EARLY YEARS

Destiny had other plans for Sanjay bhai, who was pursuing a degree in medicine. But he dropped out after second year to support his father, Dr. Anandlal B. Kothari, who was the first surgeon in the Palanpuri community.

Blessed with an empathetic nature, the responsible young man voluntarily decided to financially support his father. Some of his close relatives were in the diamond business, so Sanjay bhai joined them to learn the ropes.

It was a decision that he never expressed any regret about, thus reflecting his ability to let go of what could have been and move on in life. It was this very trait that came to fore, time and again, when faced with tough decisions at the helm of affairs as GJEPC Chairman.

By 1970, he and his cousin, Yatish Mehta, his confidante and soul friend, founded Kunal Diamonds, a trading company named after Yatish bhai's eldest son. So deep was their mutual friendship and respect that one never took any decision without consulting the other. They continue to visit their office even today, but Yatish bhai's sons Kunal and Dhaval, and Sanjay's son Sunit, have been running the trading company for a while. The second-generation entrepreneurs who started Di-atrends, a high-end jewellery company 26 years ago, have built their career on truth and transparency just as their founding fathers.

Yatish Mehta recalls: "Sanjay bhai is a



Yatish Mehta and Sanjay Kothari

principled and upright person, who has the courage to take morally right decisions. Once when our fortunes were completely wiped out, Sanjay bhai earnestly requested me that I was free to part ways as he did not want me to stay in the 'sinking ship'. But I stuck by him because of his conviction and I'm glad that I abided by my decision."

Mehta revealed that Sanjay bhai was in a dilemma when he was asked to stand for the chairmanship of GJEPC. He was a reluctant candidate and called him to seek advice. The two business partners always put friendship over profits and loss.

Sanjay bhai has been known for his fearless actions and ready acceptance of fresh ideas – an inherent sign of a top-notch leader. As one of the main proponents of making IIJS a B2B show, he put forth his points convincingly to the Council's Committee of Administration and allayed their fears. Working tirelessly, he, together with Council members, promoted the trade show across various countries. Today,



# ON A PERSONAL NOTE





## MILESTONES



### 2000-2001

- Delegation visit to Russia was a follow-up of letter of intent signed between Hon'ble President of Russia Mr. Putin and the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, which resulted in a commitment of direct supply of rough diamond of US\$ 4.54 million.
- Disruptions of import/export in March 2001

As a result of finance bill introduced before the Parliament on 28th February, 2001 and the announcement of the Govt. levying a 5% import duty on rough diamonds (including rough coloured gemstones and raw pearls) and insistence of Customs to file an undertaking even against import clearances against REP Licences resulted in virtual stoppage of clearances of import parcels from the Diamond Plaza Customs Clearance Centre, Mumbai and other Customs Ports of India. Council was able to convince

the Govt. and restore status quo w.r.t. the import policy for rough diamonds, rough coloured gemstones and raw pearls. From April 2001, these were importable duty free against a valid import license as before, whereas quantity restrictions for these were also removed, making them importable against payment of 5% import duty advalorem, without an import license.

### 2001-2002

- De-licensing of import of rough diamonds

### 2002-03

- Diamond jewellery dollar account was reintroduced
- In India, the Council was appointed as a nodal agency for issuing/verifying KP certificates for all export/import shipments of rough diamonds

### 2003-04

- Council engaged KPMG to frame strategies to boost export and also identify the role of the primary stakeholders (Govt., Industry and Council) to reach the export target of USD 16 billion.
- Council engaged A F Ferguson to conduct the study on child labour in the industry

### 2007-08

Organised Mines to Market - International Diamond Conference

IIJS Premiere has transitioned into one of the most recognised and important trade shows across the globe.

India International Jewellery Week (IIJW) was an initiative that was yet another exemplary example of his forward thinking. The world's first jewellery fashion week was conceived by Sanjay bhai while he was Convenor of Promotion, Marketing & Business Development (PMBD), GJEPC, and it worked wonders to position India as a design destination on the global stage.

### A MAN OF MANY PARTS

Sanjay bhai's love for cricket is known by his industry peers and friends. But not many know about this proficient spin bowler's dedication towards the sport. Till about the age of 60, he ran a small club of cricketers opposite Azad Maidan, and would be present on the dot of 6 every morning for net practice or to play matches.

He encouraged his son, Sunit, to play cricket and pursue other sports. After his 10th exams, Sunit was given the option of choosing a holiday abroad or being mentored by cricketer Eknath Solkar. Like father like son, Sunit chose the latter. For Sanjay bhai, education with a holistic approach was key for all-round development.

"A few mantras taught by my father are the ones that I continue to abide by," says Sunit Kothari. "Honesty is the foundation of our business. Entrusting us with responsibility was the biggest gift given by my father. When we started Diatrends, Yatishbhai and my father gave us a bit of seed money and asked us to



manage with it. From a small company of just nine people, we have grown to a 350-strong company. However, my father never ever leveraged his position to seek favours to enhance our business."

Other than cricket, Sanjay bhai has a love for friends, family and food – and a weakness for all types of mithais, especially malpua with malai, mishti doi, ice cream and the like. An inveterate traveller, a voracious reader, a caring family man, and friend to all, Sanjay bhai's compassion extends to society at large. As the Chairman of the Gem & Jewellery National Relief Foundation (GJNRF), a GJEPC charitable arm, Sanjay bhai has been part of several charitable initiatives over the years. Far from hanging up his boots, Sanjay bhai continues to play an active role in the gem and jewellery industry, more recently as Chairman of the Gem & Jewellery Skill Council of India (GJSCI).



# TRIBUTE

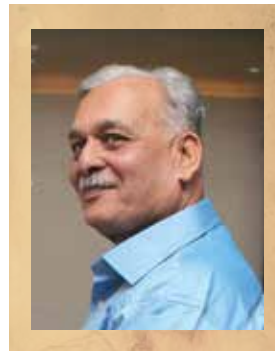
GJEPC contacted several of **Sanjay Kothari's** colleagues and friends to comment on him receiving the **Lifetime Achievement Award**.

*This fuelled recollections and fond memories of the man, who recently turned 75 on 25th January, 2022.*

## BAKUL MEHTA

Former Chairman, GJEPC

◆ It is difficult to write briefly about my friend and adviser Sanjay bhai Kothari. It is well-known that Sanjay bhai has always been forthright in his views, quick in comprehending and decision-making on any issue related to the industry, a reliable team member and an erudite speaker. His consistent contributions to the industry and obvious leadership qualities are well recognised. Sanjay bhai is one of the few members who served GJEPC for many years in various capacities with distinction. A philanthropist, Sanjay bhai has been involved in many fundraising programmes that has earned him immense respect in the industry. I have been fortunate to interact with him for many years both in the Council as well as in GII.



## VASANT MEHTA

Former Chairman, GJEPC

◆ The share of Sanjay Kothari in the success of GJEPC & the diamond industry in India is unparalleled huge. But for his vision and dedication - combined with hard work in the PMBD committee, the industry may not have reached the current heights both in Indian and international markets. His contribution in bringing up IIJS & other international exhibitions to where they are today is huge. As the Chairman of GJEPC, he led the industry with great success. It was a pleasure working with him in the Council. He is extremely well known in the diamond industry for speaking the truth and following ethical practices.

I am very glad that GJEPC has bestowed the prestigious "LIFE TIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD" - a very well deserved award to him.

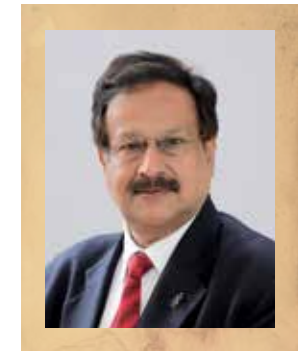
I congratulate Sanjay bhai & wish him many more years of fruitful activities.

## RAJIV JAIN

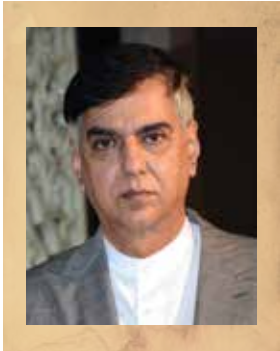
Former Chairman, GJEPC

◆ I congratulate Sanjay bhai for this well deserving honour that he had worked so hard for. For as long as I've known him, I've seen him work for the gems and jewellery industry so seamlessly. As his junior, I have learnt so many things from him. His ability to relentlessly search for solutions to problems and find innovative and practical ways to improve the jewellery industry is the key to his success.

Sanjay bhai's perseverance is an inspiration to everyone, and I have witnessed it by working closely with him for over twenty years. He has always behaved with humility, grace, and kindness. I appreciate how he always shared his success with his team, and his love and devotion to the jewellery community is evident.







### **PRAVEENSHANKAR PANDYA**

Former Chairman, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay Kothari is an untiring figure who is completely dedicated to the welfare of not only the gems and jewellery trade, but society at large. I had the privilege of working alongside him for over 25 years. He is a reformist, always ready to take tough decisions. When it comes to work, he is a restless soul.

He has given a large part of his life, over three decades, to the gems and jewellery industry – even at the cost of his personal business. He has worked in various capacities in different organisations connected to gems and jewellery. For instance, when we created the Indian Institute of Gems & Jewellery (IIGJ), he as a director, always contributed by giving meaningful time and advice.

During his tenure in the Council, he contributed immensely to the growth of IIJS, which is today one of the premier jewellery shows in this part of the world. IIJS became the best jewellery show in India, and not only attracted customers within the country, but by organising roadshows across the continents, he could manage to get a lot of overseas customers for the development of the export business.

During this time as IIJS Convener, he took Indian exhibitions overseas and worked hard to make the India Pavilion initiative a success. He worked very closely with the Ministry of Commerce to get various policies passed during his tenure as Chairman of the Council.

His contributions remain relevant to this day, whether it's attending to the needs of the industry in terms of policies, promotions, holding exhibitions or education, but also in various charitable activities and, to that extent, he still continues to work for the industry as the Chairman of GJNRF and GJSCI. His tireless work is reflected in the growth of the industry.

I wish him all the best and I am proud to be closely associated with him for more than two decades.



### **PRAMOD KUMAR AGRAWAL**

Former Chairman, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay Kothari is a very humble and selfless person who always worked for the larger interest of the trade and society. He represented the industry very confidently and gained trust of both the Government and trade. He has mentored many people, including me. It is always honour working with him.

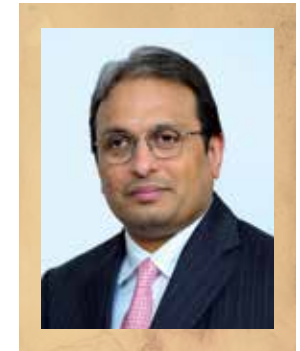
### **RUSSELL MEHTA**

Former Vice Chairman, GJEPC

◆ Morally and ethically correct; true to the old values of respecting the handshake culture; progressive in thinking; seeking to change the industry to be better all the time; leading from the front and by example as Chairman of the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council for many years; influencing many policy changes and representing our trade among all stakeholders, Sanjay bhai is a rare example of selfless dedication to the diamond industry and its community, besides being a great diamantaire.

I congratulate him on his achievements and thank him for his long service to our industry. Glad that the Council is recognising his contribution to our industry through this Lifetime Achievement Award.

My best wishes!







**PANKAJ KUMAR PAREKH**

Former Vice Chairman, GJEPC

◆ As a CoA member, I had privilege of working closely under Sanjay bhai during his entire tenure in the Council. While many of colleagues would be evaluating his astounding contributions to the industry, I'd like to comment on Sanjay bhai—The Man. I was witness to the most beautiful virtue of human character in him—Humility, that made me recall what Gurudev Tagore had said, “We come nearest to the great when we are great in humility”.

**SHAILESH SANGANI**

Convener, Exhibitions (National), GJEPC

◆ For me Sanjay bhai is like an institution, a university from whom I have learnt. His devotion towards the industry is exemplary. Sanjay bhai has been a hands-on leader who not only had visionary ideas, but brought them to fruition thanks to his perseverance and steadfast dedication to the cause. I consider myself lucky to have gotten an opportunity to work with him on quite a few projects. Today, as the industry is bestowing upon him the most coveted honour, I truly believe that he is one person who most deserving of a Lifetime Achievement Award.



**ASHOK GAJERA**

Regional Chairman, West, GJEPC

◆ I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Shri Sanjaybhai Kothari for the Lifetime Achievement Award. Mr. Kothari is one of the most prominent personalities of the gem & jewellery industry, not only in India but also in the world. He has devoted most of his time and efforts for the growth of the industry and has played a significant role in India's diamond success story.

I appreciate his dedication and contribution towards society. His hard work and tireless effort during the Covid-19 pandemic is remarkable.



**MILAN CHOKSHI**

Convener, Promotions, Marketing & Business Development, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay bhai personifies the words dedication and selfless service. For a lot of us who aspired to serve the industry, he set the bar – and it was set high.

If there ever were a reason to appoint a chairman emeritus for the industry, Sanjay bhai would fit that bill. His contribution to the industry would be remembered for decades to come.

**AJESH MEHTA**

Convener, Banking Insurance & Taxation, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay bhai is a visionary with creative ideas. Of his many contributions to the gem & jewellery industry, two that stand out are the IIJS and IIJW initiatives taken by him which have become highly successful under his passionate leadership.

Sanjay bhai was brought into the GJEPC by my father, Navinchandra Mehta, a former Vice Chairman of the Council. Life came full circle as Sanjay bhai brought in young blood into the GJEPC to inject a fresh perspective, and that's how the four of us – Colin Shah, Saunak Parikh, Nirav Bhansali, and myself – began our association with GJEPC around ten years ago. As Chairman of GJNRF, he has been actively involved in philanthropic activities. He really brings out people's altruistic side through his passion for the cause.



**SUVANKAR SEN**

Convener, SEZ Sub-Committee, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay bhai is the Dumbledore of the gem and jewellery industry. Not only has he been successful in his business when he was actively involved, his vision and contribution towards the industry, the future development of the industry and karigars is in itself an inspiration and the pathway for the next generation to follow. He is the epitome of selfless work for the industry that we will remember forever.





**ASHISH MEHTA**

Former COA Member, GJEPC

◆ My earliest recollections of Sanjay bhai Kothari go long back, much before I joined the business. He used to visit my father in the days when I was still at school.

My personal interactions with Sanjay bhai started more during his term at the GJEPC, particularly when he was Chairman of the Council. I have found him to be an exceptionally sincere and straightforward person, an individual for whom ethics and morality mattered the most. He has truly been the watchdog of the industry, which has been invaluable to the entire trade. Over the years, I have seen him work diligently at the Council to maintain discipline and a strong value-system within the trade.

I believe that Sanjay bhai’s greatest contribution to the trade is how he built IIJS. It was Sanjay bhai, as Convener of the Exhibition Committee and later as Chairman who popularised IIJS and built it into a formidable business-to-business show. This show has not only served as a platform for trade interactions, but established relationships and improved the quality of jewellery in India. The impact of this show goes far beyond the numerical, as it has fundamentally altered how the jewellery business is conducted in India. We owe this to untiring efforts of Sanjay bhai!

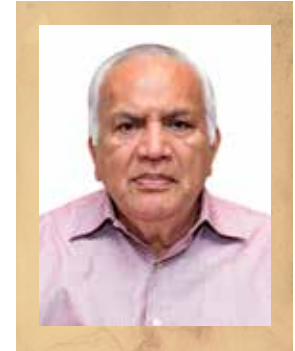
Sanjay bhai’s contribution in charitable work has been exceptional. He has been closely working with the Gem and Jewellery National Relief Foundation and Mahajan Hospital, Palanpur, to improve lives of the downtrodden. He led the industry’s efforts in helping those affected by the pandemic. I have closely seen this outstanding work. His contribution at IIGJ, Mumbai, and Gem & Jewellery Skill Council of India have also been most remarkable.

I am extremely delighted to know that the Council is honouring him for his contribution. I firmly believe that this is an honour most deserved!

**NAVRATTAN R KOTHARI**

Former COA Member, GJEPC

◆ Heartiest congratulations to Shri. Sanjay ji Kothari for the Lifetime Achievement Award. It is a matter of great pride for those who have worked with him. He has always kept the interest of the institution above himself. His dedication to the gems and jewellery trade is uppermost. I wish him all the best in his future endeavours.



**HARESH ZAVERI**

Former Convener, Exhibitions, GJEPC

◆ I have been associated with GJEPC for 28 years in the national exhibition committee. Although I worked with 12 Chairmen and had cordial relationships with all, I was closest to Sanjay bhai as we were the ones who went abroad to propagate IIJS in 2001 when the show format changed to B2B. I was fortunate to have learnt a lot from him. He was a Chairman par excellence and above all, an excellent human being.

**SHISHIR NEVATIA**

Former Member, Exhibitions, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay Bhai is the nicest human being that I have known. Very fair, looks for opportunities to do something good in general and for every individual, especially in the trade. At the same time, he is extremely intelligent, an avid reader and goes in detail, knows the strengths and weaknesses of every member in the committees that he has been involved in mostly as the head and empowers everyone accordingly.

Soft by nature and speech, the way he admonishes a person for a mistake is also taken in a very positive and light manner. I have enjoyed working with him in various groups of the trade for about 30 years and am lucky to count him as a close friend.





### **NIRMAL BARMECHA**

Former Convener, A & F, GJEPC

◆ I am extremely happy that Sanjay Bhai is receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award by GJEPC. I have never seen a more selfless person in the industry. I enjoy working with him as his energy levels and motivation are highly contagious. I am happy that I have been working together with him for more than 15 years, and we still continue to do so as directors at IIGJ. I believe that IIGJ has reached the international level only because of his hard work. He deserves the award that was long overdue.

### **HEMANT SHAH**

Former Convener, PMBD, GJEPC

◆ The task of saying a few words about Sanjay bhai is an immensely daunting task for two reasons. One, if I have to give a gift to someone who is a billionaire and has everything and more than I can even imagine, what do I give that person? Two, how can you possibly say a few words, for someone who is larger than life!

To me Sanjay bhai is a mentor, guide, shining example, target aspiration, a noble soul and many more things, but above all he is a true and dear friend.

He is a relentless well-wisher of the industry and all things fair, honest and ethical, but more importantly, he is a visionary who is constantly envisioning of what can be done to further the future of the industry and its stakeholders. And it doesn't stop there... he will ensure its transformation to an executable and useful tool for all to reap the benefits from.

The respect and love he commands have been earned with a lot of effort and sacrifices from him and his family and partner, most of all Maya bhabhi. And he is still in the process of doing all that he really wants to. All the best Sanjay bhai.



### **VIJAY CHORDIA**

Convener, Technical & Education Sub-committee, Jaipur

◆ It is an honour for me to be part of this book and express myself about the most loved person in the industry! Though he was in the business of diamond jewellery, Sanjay bhai's contribution to the coloured gemstone sector can never be forgotten. He was inclusive and transparent during the decision-making process. He was a mentor to many, and he never dismissed suggestions from younger members in GJEPC's Committee of Administration, of which I was also a part of. I cherish his association and specially the trip with him and other industry members to Pakistan to meet our counterparts there. Sanjay bhai has a special affinity to Jaipur and loves city's cuisine!

### **DR. RAJENDRA BHOLA**

Bholasons Jewellers, Chairman IIGJ Delhi

◆ I have had a long association with Sanjay bhai going back almost 30 years and we have interacted on numerous occasions. His sincere commitment to the cause of the industry has always been a standout feature. His endeavour has always been to take the industry forward and the way he always carries the trade with him in doing so is his strength. He has been involved in motivating and convincing all stakeholders for the overall development of the gem & jewellery trade, whether it be the technical training through the IIGJs, promotion of natural diamonds, or the export of jewellery by way of organising various meets and events. The industry is indeed indebted to him for his vision, devotion and above all simplicity, which made him a "Leader of Choice" for everyone.

I am extremely proud of being associated with Sanjay bhai and wish him all the best.







### VIMAL CHAND SURANA

Former COA Member, GJEPC

◆ He is a gem of the trade. Always happy and willing to help the trade wherever possible! It is a pleasure to work with him.

### DR NAWAL AGARWAL

Former COA Member, GJEPC

◆ It was a privilege for me to work with Shri. Sanjay Bhai Kothari for more than ten years in the committee of administration (COA) of GJEPC.

During his tenure as Chairman of the Council for two terms, his vision and leadership have made all the difference to the gem & jewellery industry. As a convener of PMBD, Sanjay Bhai started India International jewellery week (IIJW) and brought all the design houses on this platform.

The Indian Institute of Gems of Jewellery and IIJS Premiere & Signature are in present grandeur because of his earnest efforts and enthusiasm. At the age of 75, Sanjay Bhai is Chairman of Gem & Jewellery Skill Council of India and is training the industry's skilled workforce, remarkably. He is truly an inspiration.

I wish him a fulfilling & healthy life ahead.



### RAJEEV GARG

Executive Director & CEO, GJSCI

◆ Mr. Sanjay Kothari, a doyen of Indian gem & jewellery industry, has not only been a guiding light but also the energy behind multiple initiatives taken by Gem & Jewellery Skill Council of India (GJSCI) as its Chairman over the last many years.

He has navigated GJSCI during the most difficult Covid times, and under his dynamic leadership GJSCI has embarked upon many new journeys and achieved many milestones.

Some noteworthy projects, which were primarily Sanjay bhai's brainchild are Design Connect, Crafts Pavilion at IIJS shows, India Jewellery Excellence Symposium, and JADE, a centre for using AI in the jewellery sector. Sanjay Bhai has been an inspiration for all of us at GJSCI.

His never-say-die attitude has been responsible for developing immense self-confidence in GJSCI's team which has seen the team delivering various complex projects on time. We wish him a healthy and great life ahead and hope that GJSCI shall always keep receiving his valuable inputs and guidance in the coming years.

### BAKHTIAR KHAN

Former CEO, PGJDC, Pakistan

◆ We consider Mr. Sanjay Kothari as an iconic personality of the gems & jewellery sector of India. His remarkable contributions towards promotion of gems & jewellery trade between India & Pakistan through facilitation of trade delegations will long be remembered. As a human being, he is an experienced and upright businessman, and we hold him in high esteem.





# TAKING CENTRE STAGE







**RAMESH VORA**

GJEPC International Coordinator, Middle East

◆ Sanjay bhai is one of the most humble persons whose main goal is the betterment of the industry. During his tenure in the Council, we all saw him work rigorously day and night for the success of gem and jewellery trade. He is a fun loving and selfless leader.

**NIRUPA BHATT**

Business Coach & Strategic Adviser, Gem & Jewellery Industry Expert

◆ Growing and evolving is a natural process, and Sanjay bhai seems determined to defy nature. I have known him for more than 25 years and his enthusiasm has been consistently high. His determined efforts to introduce new projects has borne fruit.

The IIJS has become the most important industry event today which started at the World Trade Centre with few exhibitors.

I admire his ability to move on, if any initiative does not deliver as expected. Sanjay bhai's efforts to collaborate with stakeholders is amazing and this quality requires patience. He does not hesitate to reach out to one and all in the overall interest of the industry. I have benefitted working with him. He teaches you to think big, forget and forgive.

Eleanor Roosevelt: "Do one thing that scares you every day."

Sanjay bhai has been practicing this adage for years. The Indian gems & jewellery industry is fortunate to have a dedicated person like him and to have been at helm of affairs at GJSCI, I wish him good health and flow of energy, so he keeps running and keep us all on our toes!



**SACHIN JAIN**

Managing Director, De Beers India

◆ Mr. Sanjay Kothari is a true visionary in his own right. He has shaped and impacted the gem & jewellery industry through multiple ways in his years of service. His dedication towards the cause of promoting local artisans and craftsmen is highly commendable. There are very few people who deserve the honour of a Lifetime Achievement Award and Mr. Sanjay Kothari is definitely one of them. I thank him for his service and the way he has paved the industry for us, and I wish him all the very best in his future endeavours.

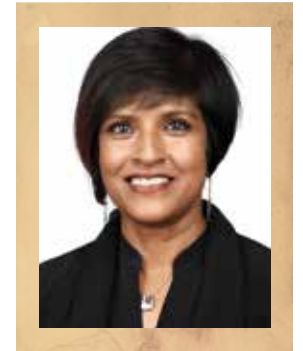
**VAISHALI BANERJEE**

Managing Director India, Platinum Guild International

◆ Congratulations dear Sanjaybhai on this wonderful award and recognition! It is most deserving and so right that this honour is bestowed upon you. Your vision, contribution and commitment to this industry is legendary.

You were one of the first people I met in the industry when I joined PGI. New to the industry, I was faced with the task of representing the platinum players to the authorities to help rationalise the duties on the metal to jump start the domestic market. I didn't know enough so I approached you. And there you were, available to listen, patient, guiding me and helping me through the process. Year after year. Till the time it was done. I'm sure you remember this. To me this incident really talks to the person you are. Thoughtful, helpful and visionary. You believed in the future of a category that did not exist in India till then, and were willing to go that extra mile to help PGI and the industry in your role as the Chairman of the GJEPC. These traits of yours have helped many people I'm sure, the industry has definitely benefitted from it! You never shy away from trying new things to energise the industry to enable innovation and up the game for the players. Your ability to back new ideas and to foresee future opportunities is very inspiring.

Your ability to engage and interact with members across the industry spectrum, your humility and interest has made you friends that respect who you are. I look forward to your thoughts, ideas, guidance and inspiration for years to come!



### K K DUGGAL

Director of Trade & Policy, GJEPC

◆ I've had the fortune of working under the guidance of Shri Sanjay Kothari, who as GJEPC Chairman and PMBD Convener, was instrumental in taking initiatives for promoting the trade, which only a visionary like him could think of. He took a bold step of launching a trade delegation to Pakistan at a time when many feared the outcome of such effort. But the response we got after meeting with the then PM of Pakistan was remarkable. Mr Kothari's geniality with the jewellers and bureaucrats of Pakistan was so remarkable that local newspapers were full of praise for the GJEPC. He impressed all with his simplicity, and got along with the trade and colleagues. I wish him good health and the very best in life.



### DOLLY CHOUDHARY

Director, Promotions, Marketing & Business Development, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay bhai is a visionary leader of the gem and jewellery trade with an immense level of energy. His passion to accomplish his goals has driven him to attain success in most of his pursuits. His contribution towards the development of the trade in India has been enormous and expansive. Council has grown in leaps and bounds under his leadership. A true human being, selfless, humble, dedicated and an inspiration to many, I am privileged to have been mentored under his guidance. Sanjay bhai, heartiest congratulations for the Lifetime Achievement Award! Your contribution to the Council and consistent efforts towards the development of the trade is unparalleled.



### SANJAY SINGH

Consultant, Regional Office, Jaipur, GJEPC

◆ Sanjay Kothari Ji is a very humble and selfless personality. He always put the industry perspective with full conviction which enabled GJEPC to convince the Government on various policy issues. I have learnt a lot while working under him. I wish him a very active and healthy life ahead.



### VIJAY GOLECHA SANDEEP

Owner, Golecha's Jewels

◆ Congratulations to Sanjay ji Kothari for being honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award. We are witness to your amazing journey for the advancement of the industry. You have always given your heart and soul - be it IJJS or IJW. I have been your silent admirer. I respect your dedication, honesty and loyalty. We will be always grateful to you.

- " कुछ लोग ज़िंदगी से कभी जाते नहीं - वो रह जाते हैं हम में ,  
कभी कोई कहानी तो कभी कोई निशानी बन कर -



### FARAH KHAN

Founder, Farah Khan Fine Jewellery

◆ Sanjay Kothari is an exceptional and a wonderful human being. A thorough gentleman and a very good mentor, he was very kind to me when I entered the jewellery industry. I always wish him well.







### VARUNI JANI

Founder, Varuna D. Jani Fine Jewellery

◆ He is a godfather for jewellery designers in India. He has done a lot for encouraging and promoting them. An honest and humble person, he is an iconic figure of the industry.

### BHARAT SARAIYA

M/s B. Saraiya & Co

◆ I extend my heartiest congratulations to my dear friend Sanjay bhai Kothari for receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award from GJEPC for his selfless service to the gems & jewellery industry. During his two terms as a Chairman and 25 years in the Council, he has diligently worked to better & bring new changes in the best interests of our trade.

I am truly fortunate to have a friend like Sanjay bhai, who always stands by me and gives me right advice when I reach out to him.

My heartiest congratulations and best wishes to Sanjay bhai.

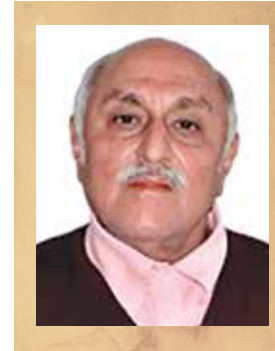


### BALRAM GARG

Managing Director, PC Jewellers

◆ PC Jewellers had firsthand experience of association with GJEPC through Shri Sanjay Kothari, who was the key person to motivate us for participating in several promotional events of the Council.

We found him very supportive and always concerned for the betterment of the trade. The initiative of various diamond promotion programmes, ambassador meets in Delhi, and the shows held in Mumbai were all held with the single objective of taking our gem and jewellery trade to greater heights. Such was his devotion to the cause of the trade. He is truly a selfless leader of the gem and jewellery fraternity. We are proud to be associated with him.



### RAJESH KHANNA

Former Member, Northern Region, GJEPC

◆ As one of the founder members of the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council, Bholu Nath Brothers Jewellers, Delhi, has had a long association with the Council. In these several decades of comradeship, we found Mr Sanjay Kothari to be a leader par excellence and one who always had the interests of the trade in his mind. His untiring efforts for promoting the jewellery trade have no parallel. People like him are a rare to find these days. I wish him all the best.

### ISHU DATWANI

Founder, Anmol Jewellers

◆ I have known Sanjay Bhai for a very long time and the one quality that stands out the most is his selfless devotion to the well-being of the industry. He is not concerned with taking credit for his contributions or pushing his own agenda and he always strives to seek help, support and the opinions of others, which reflects the qualities of a good leader. His hard work, loyalty to the jewellery industry and the trade fraternity, and his invaluable contribution towards the progress of the jewellery industry will always be our biggest take-away from his journey.



### MITHILESH PANDEY

Director - Membership, GJEPC

◆ Mr. Sanjay Kothari is an energetic, strong, reliable and hardworking leader. I got the opportunity to work with Sanjay Bhai, directly and indirectly, for many years. He is one person who is always passionate about trying something new and had the ability to simplify issues and motivate his team. One of his best traits is his ability to take quick decisions. An impartial person, he was always concerned about the well-being of his colleagues. The selection of Sanjay Bhai by the Award Committee adds to the dignity of the award.





# IN ACTION





## VINOD KURIYAN

Former Editor of Solitaire International & Veteran Industry Journalist

◆ Sanjay Kothari has two personal traits that were transformational when he first took over as Chairman of the GJEPC – he always told the truth, and he was determined to do the right thing.

It is not easy telling the truth when you're the Chairman and things have gone wrong in the gem and jewellery industry. Yet Sanjay bhai faced the media and told the truth, acknowledging any shortcomings, wrongdoings, and deviations in the industry. This caused consternation within the industry at first, but gradually, the rest of the world was ready to believe and take him at his word.

This not only made for a positive perception of the industry, it spilled over into other areas, making even the Reserve Bank of India to state that Sanjay bhai and his team (he gathered a team of people who were dedicated to the welfare of the industry and getting the job done) as dependable partners.

His second trait of being determined to do the right thing, has been equally consequential. Sanjay bhai has never been afraid to not just call out wrongdoing by individuals, but also point out publicly what he thought the gem and jewellery industry was doing wrong in dealing with them.

For me, these personal traits have made for a personal bond with Sanjay bhai, that because of his trustworthiness, has endured many decades and gone way beyond just industry matters.

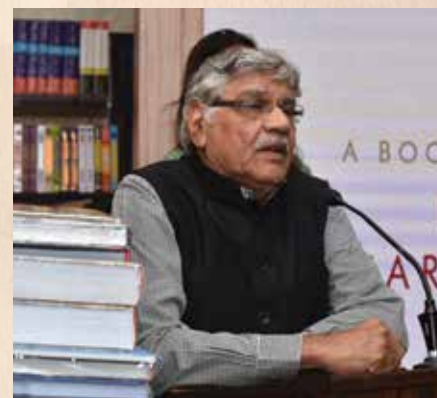
Long may he endure!



## SAMIT BHATTA

Publisher, Retail Jeweller

◆ As the former chairperson of GJEPC, Mr. Sanjay Kothari has been instrumental in uniting the various unorganised manufacturing sectors from the remotest fringes of India to follow a common goal of excellence. Nurturing Indian craftsmanship, Sanjay bhai has been a pioneer in promoting rare, indigenous designs to international jewellers and various global markets.





### SUMESH WADHERA

Managing Director and Chief Editor,  
The Art of Jewellery

◆ Some men have greatness thrust upon them and then some men achieve greatness. Shri Sanjay Kothari belongs to the latter group. His is a life dedicated to the welfare and growth of the gems and jewellery industry.

I feel privileged to be penning a few lines on Sanjay bhai. A person whom everyone in the industry immensely respects and admires for his vision and ability to take everyone along.

My association with Sanjay Bhai goes back to 2003 when as the Chairman of GJEPC he took the India International Jewellery Show (IIJS) to new heights. He would always meet me with a lot of warmth and discuss new ideas, suggestions and share his concerns even though I was relatively a newcomer in the industry. Over the years, I have had closer interactions with him and his passion for the growth and development of the industry is totally inspiring.

In his current capacity as the Chairman of GJSCI and GJNRF, he has taken many initiatives that have created a huge impact on the industry's progress. During the pandemic, the GJNRF, under his leadership, generously supported all stakeholders and stepped forward to set up relief camps and supplied food, medical equipment, medical supplies and much more.

He is also the driving force at GJSCI which provides training and devolvement and helps the industry to produce skilled workforce at par with global standards.

I would like to congratulate Sanjay Bhai for all his achievements and for the prestigious "Lifetime Achievement Award" being bestowed upon him by GJEPC for his invaluable contributions to the industry.

Wishing him the best of the health and may he continue to be an inspiration to all of us.



### NILAN SINGH

Karsin Communications & Media Pvt. Ltd.

◆ If anyone is an embodiment of the saying "A Man for all seasons, a Man for all reasons", it is Sanjay Kothari, who has worked for the gems & jewellery industry for several decades in many capacities – and more importantly, even without any portfolio or designation. Vision, perspective, attention to detail; and most importantly, a willingness to get down to picking up the slack, and, if required, leading from the trenches, so to speak, are all the marks of the man. Every project he worked on – at the national or international level – was taken to a higher level; and an older, bureaucratic style of work was transformed into a new dynamic, result-oriented functioning, under his watch. His greatest trait was his care and interest in not only his colleagues, but also his staff; and his respect for outside professionals, in short, with everyone he interacted with, in the course of his work.

Sanjay and I began our journey in the GJEPC at the same time. He was unfailingly supportive and appreciative; always giving credit where it was due. He was the most all-round wonderful person to work with.

### GUNJAN JAIN

Industry Expert

◆ What can one say about Sanjay Bhai? I came in contact with him around 17-18 years back when I was a new entrant in the industry. I learned a lot from him. It was always a pleasure to meet him; his aura and vibe is very energetic and positive. Above all, his selfless attitude to support and work for the industry is commendable and inspiring. I wish him a long and healthy life.





