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**61st Bangkok Gems and Jewelry Fair Kicks Off**

February 21, 18 by Albert Robinson



(IDEX Online) – The 61st Bangkok Gems and Jewelry Fair (BGJF) under the theme “Heritage & Craftsmanship” has opened. The fair is being held under the auspices of the Ministry of Commerce’s Department of International Trade Promotion (DITP).

The fair aims to highlight Thailand’s cultural heritage and the craftsmanship of Thai artisans while setting the stage for local and international companies to engage in trade negotiations.

The Ministry of Commerce said it is confident that the fair will play a vital role in the country’s continuously increasing exports of gems and jewelry in 2018.

Sontirat Sontijirawong, Minister of Commerce (pictured at the show), said that the gems and jewelry industry is a high-potential industry that is key to the Thai economy. “The strength of the industry lies throughout the value chain, from sourcing, manufacturing, to trading, with a workforce of approximately 1.2 million from upstream to downstream. Thus, the government is committed to implementing measures to ensure continuous growth of the industry while setting a goal of propelling Thailand to become the ‘World’s Jewelry Hub’”.

“The Ministry of Commerce has carried out policies to promote the growth of the gems and jewelry industry in order to increase the competitive edge for businesses while seeking new market channels and developing new products that cater to the latest industry trends. The Bangkok Gems and Jewelry Fair is a key platform that offers an opportunity for Thai companies, both large and small, to do business with high-potential businesspeople and buyers from around the world, learn about consumers’ needs, and expand their business networks and exchange knowledge with others,” Sontijirawong said.

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To align with the government's "Thailand 4.0" and "Creative Economy" initiatives, the fair organizer is presenting new ideas in exhibition zones, from The New Faces featuring jewelry products from leading SMEs across the country with over 120 new exhibitors, the Innovation and Design Zone (IDZ) featuring innovative products from start-ups as well as jewelry that utilize new techniques, to The Niche Showcase featuring the latest trends in jewelry for niche markets.

Moreover, insightful seminars and consultation workshops from Thai and international experts are offered as well as a mobile gems analyzing unit from the Gem and Jewelry Institute of Thailand (GIT) and other world-leading institutes.

In 2017, the gems and jewelry industry was ranked the third exporting industry in Thailand after automotive and computers. Last year's exports totaled nearly \$13 billion, and when excluding unwrought gold, the industry saw an increase of 2.25%, compared to 2016, which was the first time in the past three years, the organizers said.

"The outlook for gems and jewelry exports in 2018 is positive as trading partners of Thailand are recovering from stagnant growth. The Ministry expects that this edition of Bangkok Gems and Jewelry Fair will open new opportunities for Thai companies. Combined with government measures such as tax exemptions, the fair is certain to boost trade in this industry while propelling Thailand to become one of the world's gems and jewelry trading hub," the Commerce Minister said.

The Ministry expects that show will welcome 20,000 visitors from 130 countries, generating over THB 2 billion sales. Around 900 leading companies in Thailand and abroad are participating in the fair, occupying over 2,000 booths.

The 61st Bangkok Gems & Jewelry Fair takes place from February 21-25, 2018 at Challenger Hall 1-3, IMPACT Muang Thong Thani.