



Exquisitely crafted jewellery manufactured by local artisans in India, dates back to more than 5,000 years. This unbroken ancient heritage of ours has remained by and large traditional in nature. However, in recent years, the scenario has changed a lot due to international brands being marketed by many foreign countries. This has made it imperative for the indigenous producers to switch over to modern means of production and professional management of jewellery enterprises.

Along with this, there is also an urgent need for setting up and running jewellery training institute of international standards to provide the cutting edge advantage to Indian artisans thereby also helping in providing gainful employment to budding artisans in the jewellery segment. With the potential for Indian jewellery exports expected to grow significantly, such a training facility would give the necessary impetus in capturing new export markets. Karnataka is home to a huge jewellery manufacturing industry, producing varied handcrafted jewellery. In fact Bangalore is a large exporter of jewellery, with the majority of it being sent to the Persian Gulf.

### **Manipal Institute of Jewellery Management (MIJM):**

In the forefront offering training and education in jewellery management in Karnataka is the prestigious Manipal Institute of Jewellery Management, which is among the first institutes on jewellery designing and management in the country. Prof. (Col) M.M. Shanbhag is the Director at the MIJM. It's a unique institute offering 3 years degree course in the same. It gives an opportunity to budding creative minds to pursue their interests and take on a career of their choice in the booming and glittering jewellery industry. After bagging a degree in jewellery management, a fresh graduate can take on lucrative assignments either as junior executives in jewellery enterprises or be a freelance jewellery designer or gemologist or pursue higher education like MBA or join the band-wagon of jewellery entrepreneurs.

## **Training in Latest Techniques in Jewellery Manufacturing in Karnataka**

Written by Nina Rai

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The institute has kept itself updated with the latest developments and techniques in jewellery designing & manufacturing. Keeping this in view, MIJM regularly conducts various workshops related to jewellery business like fashion jewellery, jewellery designing using latest software like Rhino and Precious CAD, latest techniques in manufacturing like casting, gemstones identification diamond grading, etc. Experts are invited from various parts of the country as resource persons for these workshops like Dr. R V Karanth popularly known as “Father of Indian Gemology” and Rajan Mistry, Founder-Rajson International. These varied workshops give students, jewellers and interested participants an opportunity to learn first hand the latest trends in the jewellery field. In fact many ex-students of MIJM have joined as executives in well-known jewellery enterprises like Tanishq, Hoop, Ganjam Nagappa & Sons, etc. and some are pursuing their higher studies in jewellery design, gemology and management in Indian and foreign universities.

### **Workshop on Latest Jewellery Technology:**

Keeping in view the vast scope for employment in this sector, and also for providing an opportunity to jewellers and artisans to learn the latest technology in jewellery manufacturing, MIJM organised a two-day workshop on the “Latest Techniques in Jewellery Manufacturing” on 15th & 16th May 2009 at the T. M. A. Pai Planetarium Bldg in Manipal, Karnataka. It was inaugurated by Prof. (Dr) H.S. Ballal, Pro-Chancellor Manipal University who in his inaugural address said “It is essential for the country to become a leader in the field of jewellery manufacturing. While Italy is the largest exporter of jewellery in the world, the fact is that India is the largest consumer of gold jewellery in the world. And hence, effort should be made to make available the latest technology to jewellers in the country”, he advised.

Prof. (Col) M.M Shanbhag welcomed the gathering. Talking about the domestic demand for gold jewellery despite recession and rising prices, Col. Shanbhag said that it has seen an upward spiral. In 2008 it was worth 90,000 crore as compared to it being 71,000 crore in 2007, he pointed out. The chief guests and resource persons on the occasion were Rajan Mistry, Proprietor Rajson International, Mumbai a pioneer in jewellery manufacturing equipment and expert in the latest techniques in jewellery manufacturing and Devesh B Davda, President, Metalz Crafter, Mumbai an expert in the State-of-Art technology in jewellery manufacturing.

Speaking on the occasion Devesh B Davda declared “With the growing competition it becomes necessary for jewellers to be dynamic enough to cope with challenges and changes in market.” According to him States like Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad had emerged as centres of jewellery manufacturing. But it was time jewellers in small cities and towns too adopted the latest technology.

With the workshop's principal objective being to educate the jewellers and artisans on the latest techniques in jewellery manufacturing, its contents comprised of 1. A study of the latest techniques in jewellery manufacturing like rubber mould making, vulcanizing, wax injection, and investment making for casting, 2 Introduction of latest machines and tools used in jewellery manufacturing, 3 Study of the latest jewellery casting methods, 4 Learning casting of brass and copper alloys for making artificial jewellery. ..

### **Fashion/Artificial Jewellery Workshop:**

In present times, modern women prefer to own variety of jewellery sets. However, rising gold prices and craze to keep up with the current trends has made her to switch over to fashion jewellery which is attractive yet inexpensive. The materials used in making of fashion jewellery are readily available, eco-friendly, non-allergic and light weight which has made it very popular.

MIJM had conducted a two-day fashion jewellery workshop in Manipal on Oct 8 and 9, 2009 with more than 100 students and local women in Manipal enthusiastically participating in it. It was inaugurated by Brig (Dr) Somnath Mishra, Director Manipal Institute of Technology. In his inaugural speech Brig. Mishra emphasised on the significance of fashion jewellery in present times especially when the cost of precious metals was rising steeply.

"Fast changing trends in fashion is another reason why women today prefer jewellery to match their dress than gold ornaments, which have been reduced to occasional use only," Brig Mishra said. Prof. (Col) M.M. Shanbhag the director of MIJM while welcoming the participants stressed on the importance of having such a workshop on low cost jewellery. A well-known artist from Udupi Ramesh Rao, while expolating on the difference between the art and craft, advised the jewellery management students to carve a niche as both artists and craftsmen.

The workshop was indeed an ideal and a novel way of providing practical training to the ladies and student crowd in the art of making fashion jewellery using unique, natural yet inexpensive materials like coconut shells, sea shells, terracotta, and bamboo, beads, and glass and paper pulp. The participants were given live demonstration and practical training in making fashion jewellery. The training was imparted by expert instructors from the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) Bangalore.

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In fact at a later date MIJM is planning to conduct a workshop on “Advanced Techniques of Jewellery Designing” calling experts jewellery designers from Mumbai and Jaipur. It must be remembered there is a profession out there open for any person who wishes to earn a decent livelihood making use of his creativity and enjoying his work too.