



Reference No.IEIA/1036/2020

31st December 2020

Mr. Sanjay Degaonkar, IAS
Joint Secretary - Industry
Department of Industries
Government of Maharashtra
Mumbai

Dear Mr. Degaonkar,

Sub: Regarding conduct of B2B Exhibitions in Maharashtra

This has reference to our earlier submission through request letter vide Reference No.IEIA/1032/2020 dated 24th November 2020 for our request for support for enabling conduct of B2B Exhibitions.

It is a well-known fact that Business Exhibitions act as catalysts to the overall economy of the region where these are held. Besides the direct impact generated on the economy of the region and country by way of tax collections, employment generation etc., a huge indirect impact is also generated by Exhibitions by way of boosting the business & trade, foreign exchange earnings, travel and tourism across the regions.

Mumbai has been a hub of such exhibitions which have been greatly contributing towards the growth of the State's economy. COVID-19 had adversely affected this sector with a complete standstill since the month of March, 2020 and **despite the country wide permission to conduct B2B Exhibitions as per Unlock 5.0 guidelines, the sector is unable to operate due to non-availability of purpose built Exhibition Venues in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai which are occupied as COVID Centres.** This is leading to a **great opportunity loss to the State of Maharashtra as Organisers of Exhibitions including many leading sectoral associations and trade bodies are looking for alternate options of Venues outside the State for conducting the trade shows.**

Also like to draw your kind attention to the recent notification dated December 15, 2020 issued by your good office regarding SOPs for conducting B2B Exhibitions in the State. According to the said notification, it is mandatory for the participants of B2B Exhibitions to **obtain a Negative COVID-19 test report for participation in B2B Exhibitions in the State. This requirement will adversely affect the prospective participation in exhibitions and the organisers would not be able to conduct the shows owing to unwillingness of business participants to visit these shows** due to the mandatory requirement of negative COVID report obtained within 72 hours of participation.

We would like to humbly submit that **B2B Exhibitions are organised business activities with high level of traceability of all attendees** owing to the use of Technology and pre-registration systems which are integral part of such exhibitions. **The well planned layout and structured conduct of B2B Exhibitions ensures much higher security to its participants and stakeholders as compared to Shopping Malls, Railways and Metro Transport systems and many other sectors with high participation where the visitors and travellers are neither traceable nor follow a structured approach of visiting / travelling.** Moreover the sector is also highly competent to adhere to all requisite safety protocols and also regulate the movement of **business visitors who visit these trade shows on basis of informed business decisions.**

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We truly hope that the Department of Industries, Govt. of Maharashtra will positively consider our submissions in the interest of stakeholders of the Exhibitions Sector as well as for supporting various MSME entities and sectors that depend on Exhibitions for their business.

We humbly request you to kindly look into this matter and allow the participants of B2B Exhibitions to visit without the requirement of negative COVID test report and also allow the release of the Exhibition Venues at the earliest, so that Organisers may start the booking process at these venues and announce their exhibition dates to the stakeholders.

Look forward to your earliest kind attention and consideration of our request.

With warm regards,

S. Balasubramanian
President
Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA)

Copy to: Shri Ravindra Boratkar
President, MEDC
Mumbai