

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## 60 Seconds with...



**Heer Shah**

*VP of Brand Strategy and Marketing at Heyaru Group*



**HEYARU**  
CARBON REINVENTED

***“Bigger, brighter and greener diamonds, made in Europe.”***

*With 5+ years of experience and graduated from Imperial College London, **Heer Shah** specialises in strategy, digital innovation, marketing & client relations, helping brands scale in the direct-to-consumer and e-commerce space. She has joined the Heyaru Group to strategically establish their brand and grow their sales. Prior to that, she worked with brands like Procter & Gamble, Rituals, Pandora, and The North Face.*

*As a company Heyaru strives to become the leading lab grown diamond producer by innovating highly disruptive technologies and applications of diamond. We seek to elevate the scientific advancement of the region while also being exemplary stewards of the environment by using 100% renewable energy and hydrogen generation technologies. We desire to empower the consumer by decentralizing the availability of our diamonds for gem applications and giving them a choice with a clear traceability of origin.*

## **Tell us about Heyaru Engineering and your vision for the company...**

Heyaru started in 2012 with the idea of creating a LGD (lab-grown diamonds). The vision is to be recognized as an advanced materials manufacturing tech company. Creating materials like diamonds that can be used for making tools and application which significantly advance mankind.

What we want to do at Heyaru is very interesting. We want to scale the production and decentralize the availability of our diamonds, empowering the consumers and giving them more choice. We want to create knowledge and elevate the scientific advancement of the region, and we want to educate and connect with the end consumers. We want to be an exemplary role model when it comes to the environment and use 100% renewable energy.

As each location has its own advantages, we currently produce in Belgium and India. Initially at Heyaru, we are more of a B2B company, but soon we will develop a consumer facing brand as the aim is to bring the product as close as possible to the actual end consumer. The strategy is still being prepared, so currently we are focusing on scaling up the production.

## **Technological innovation appears to be at the heart of Heyaru. Tell us about the company focus on Type IIa diamonds and the split between the production of gem quality diamonds vs. industrial applications for diamond technologies?**

All the diamonds we produce in our CVD reactors are type IIa, most of which are used for gem applications. We are trying to improve a lot of things in our production using green energy and hydrogen that are generated at our own premises, and we are further including automation and mass production to improve efficiencies. A combination of several things to make the diamonds we produce bigger, better, brighter, and greener. Currently approximately 2% of our diamonds are used for industrial applications and academic research purpose.

## **As originally an Indian company, head quartered in UAE, Heyaru aims to become the largest diamond factory in the EU. Tell us about your strategic growth expansion plan for this plant in Flanders and why you choose to base your plant in Belgium?**

Yes, we are of Indian origin, with our HQ in UAE. Our strategy is to expand our production in phases, we are currently in phase I and we will be raising finance to further expand. In the EU we have already been in production since 2020 and our initial steps would be to target the gem application industry, after which we will go towards other high-end industrial applications by scaling the production.

We work with local and international universities for R&D and other developments. The plan is to continue expanding in phases and be the largest diamond factory in EU, creating our own Diamond Valley in the heart of Europe. We plan to reach our goal by 2026/2027, assuming and hoping that there are no further geopolitical factors or pandemics interrupting our growth!

## **Can you give us a little technical insight into your selected production methods and why you have chosen to specialize in CVD technologies?**

At Heyaru, in Belgium we are focusing on the CVD (Chemical Vapour Deposition) technology and the reason for this is that this technology allows us to have a production that is more environmentally friendly. We think that CVD is cleaner compared to HPHT and therefore we chose CVD.

**Looking at the ariel photographs of your plant, it appears that you have made a massive investment in solar power. Tell us about your approach to renewables and sustainability particularly in light of the on-going energy crisis...**

Around our factory there is a significant regional investment made in solar and wind power. Once our factory is up and ready, we would like to have our diamonds produced with renewable energy. As mentioned in our mission statement, our aim is to have our production with 100% green energy and 100% green hydrogen. That's the goal!

The region where we are is one of the best for solar and wind renewable energy generation. Currently, we use approximately 50%-75% solar energy depending on the season. For example, in the summer we use 75% solar energy, and in the winter around 50% in our production.

**Given the ambitious and unique plans which Heyaru have in this space, who would you say are your main competitors?**

Currently in the lab grown space, especially in CVD, there are only about 25 or 30 players in the world. Therefore, there is not a lot of competition like in the natural diamond space with 1000s of the players.

In the future the competition in the lab grown space will only grow, especially as there is money to be made. Additionally, it is a scientifically advanced product with continuous R&D investment needed to allow for further growth. There will be newcomers who will enter this space because there is potential in the marketing, and it will be exciting for them.

In the lab grown space one is always interested because you are trying to be the market leader, you want to make a bigger, better and brighter stone faster and greener! Additionally, one is also working on the newest technology, so sometimes winning and losing are not even the goals, it's the real excitement and passion of growing the diamond which is the fun part!

At the end of the day, it is the consumers who are our ultimate partners and therefore it is thrilling to continuously develop so that we can bring our products to the consumer in an ethical and economically attainable way. I say ethical, because with LGD the consumers are choosing to spend their money on a product that indirectly helps save the planet as there is no digging, mining, drilling and tonnes of soil displacement, and I say economically because there is an extra saving which the consumer can then spend on other fun and exciting things.

**When is an anticipated go-to market launch planned? Will this be focused on the EU in the first instance?**

Currently our focus is on serving the B2B market, there is a huge demand as the prices are also very attractive. Later we plan to go B2C and of course, our first target market will be the US. With our main mission statement of being green diamonds made in Europe, grown in the most ethical standards; we will look to work with some recognised jewellery brands or designers and then tap into the European market too. The markets are still opening up, the awareness for LGD has increased in a huge way compared to 10 years ago. In the long-term, LGD will benefit the advancement of all mankind.

## What was your motivation on joining the IGDA and what impact would you like to effectuate on the industry?

IGDA is an institution for LGD, and it is our rightful duty to join the IGDA. In fact we joined IGDA much later compared to some other players and we regret that, but we are now proud to say that we are a member of the IGDA group which is promoting lab grown diamonds. We stand together with IGDA and other members to make sure the Lab Grown diamond industry flourishes; consumers get the maximum knowledge and have access to a wide choice of created diamonds.

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