



New Norms on Hallmarking of Gold

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Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution** made it **mandatory for the hallmarking of gold jewellery**, which will be **implemented in a phased manner**.

Key Points

- **About Hallmarking:**
 - The **Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS)**, which operates the gold and silver hallmarking scheme in India, defines hallmarking as the **“accurate determination and official recording of the proportionate content of precious metal in precious metal articles.”**
 - So, it is a **“guarantee of purity or fineness”** of precious metal articles, which **started in 2000**.
 - In India, at present **two precious metals namely gold and silver** have been brought **under the purview of Hallmarking**.
 - The **BIS certified jewellers** can get their **jewellery hallmarked from any of the BIS recognized Assaying and Hallmarking Centres (A&HC)**.
 - Earlier, it was **optional for the jewellers** and thus **only 40% of gold jewellery** was getting hallmarked.
- **Implementation in a Phased Manner:**
 - In the first phase, gold hallmarking **will be available only in 256 districts and jewellers having annual turnover above Rs. 40 lakh** will come under its purview.
 - A **certain category of jewellery and items will also be exempted** from the mandatory requirement of hallmarking.
 - Jewellery for international exhibitions, jewellery for government-approved B2B (Business-to-Business) domestic exhibitions will be exempted from mandatory Hallmarking.

- **Need of Gold Hallmarking:**

- **India is the biggest consumer of gold.** However, the level of hallmarked jewellery is very low in the country.
- The mandatory hallmarking will **protect the public against lower caratage** (the fraction of pure gold) and ensure **consumers do not get cheated** while buying gold ornaments.

It will help to get the **purity as marked on the ornaments.**

- It will **bring in transparency** and assure the consumers of quality.
- It will **weed out anomalies and corruption in the system of manufacturing of jewellery.**

Bureau of Indian Standards

- BIS is the **National Standard Body** of India for the harmonious development of the activities of **standardization, marking and quality certification of goods.**
- **Standards Formulation:** BIS formulates Indian Standards in line with the national priorities for various sectors that have been grouped under 14 Departments like Chemicals, Food and Agriculture, Civil, Electro-technical, Electronics & Information Technology, etc.
- **BIS' International Activities:**
 - BIS is a **founder member of ISO (International Organization for Standardization)** and is actively involved in the development of International Standards.
 - India is **represented in IEC (International Electro-technical Commission)** through BIS. IEC is the world's leading organization for the preparation and publication of International Standards for all electrical, electronic and related technologies.
 - BIS is the **National Enquiry Point for WTO -TBT (World Trade Organisation – Technical Barriers to Trade).**
- **Other Initiatives:**
 - **BIS SDO Recognition Scheme:**
To attain the **One Nation One Standard** vision of the Government of India, BIS launched a scheme which provides for Recognition of SDO (Standard Developing Organization).
 - **Product Certification Scheme:**
BIS operates a Product Certification scheme for ensuring compliance to Indian Standards. Presence of **BIS standard mark (popularly known as ISI mark)** on a product indicates conformity to the relevant Indian Standard.

Source: IE