

as they are engaging in predatory pricing and are providing excessive discounts. In this regard, responses/clarifications were sought from e-commerce companies concerned on the allegations made by CAIT. All e-commerce companies, in their responses have maintained that they do not exercise any control over sellers and operate a pure marketplace. Any discount which is offered are offered by the seller/vendor or the respective brand alone.

- (iii) CAIT has also filed a petition with the Jodhpur Bench of Rajasthan High Court alleging FDI policy violations by e-commerce companies like Flipkart and Amazon which is *sub-judice*.
- (iv) Imposition of unfair or discriminatory prices (including predatory pricing) by a dominant enterprise or group is prohibited under provisions of Section 4 of the Competition Act, 2002. The Act provides for establishment of a quasi-judicial body *viz* the Competition Commission of India (CCI) which decides matters of anti-competitive practices, including *inter alia* predatory pricing, on a reference by the aggrieved party.

Mandatory hallmarking of gold

2943. SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that hallmarking of gold is going to be made mandatory;
- (b) if so, whether hallmarking is going to be made mandatory for all grades;
- (c) the reasons for not bringing 20 carat gold under hallmarking norms;
- (d) the number of hallmarking centres in the country, State-wise;
- (e) whether it is a fact that the above centres are not able to cater to the needs of the country; and
- (f) if so, the steps taken to increase the number of such hallmarking centres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Standards IS 1417:2016 presently prescribes only three grades namely 14, 18 and 22 carats for gold jewellery and artefacts which have been proposed to be made mandatory.

(c) Based on the deliberations of Technical Committee, on precious metals, in BIS it has been decided that since primary demand in gold jewellery/artefacts was under the three grades, it is prudent to keep these three grades only for hallmarking gold jewellery/artefacts for the clarity and benefit of the consumers.

(d) As on 31st October, 2019, 877 hallmarking and assaying (A&H) centres throughout India have been recognized by BIS. The State-wise list is given in Statement (See below).

(e) and (f) As on 31 October 2019, 877 Assaying and Hallmarking Centres have been recognized by BIS. The average number of articles hallmarked per day per centre in the year is about 225 only. A typical centre can hallmark 500 pieces per shift (or about 1500 pieces per day) with one set of machines. Thus, the average utilization of the capacity of the A&H centres is less than 50% and as on date there is no capacity constraint.

Statement

State-wise No. of A&H Centres

Sl. No.	State/UT	A & H Centres
1.	Andhra Pradesh	43
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0
3.	Assam	5
4.	Bihar	25
5.	Chhattisgarh	6
6.	Goa	2
7.	Gujarat	74
8.	Haryana	18
9.	Himachal Pradesh	2
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	3
11.	Jharkhand	9
12.	Karnataka	50
13.	Kerala	69

Sl. No.	State/UT	A & H Centres
14.	Ladakh	0
15.	Madhya Pradesh	16
16.	Maharashtra	123
17.	Manipur	0
18.	Meghalaya	0
19.	Mizoram	0
20.	Nagaland	0
21.	Odisha	19
22.	Punjab	23
23.	Rajasthan	42
24.	Sikkim	0
25.	Tamil Nadu	100
26.	Telangana	29
27.	Tripura	2
28.	Uttar Pradesh	65
29.	Uttarakhand	3
30.	West Bengal	102
31.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0
32.	Chandigarh	4
33.	Delhi	41
34.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0
35.	Daman and Diu	0
36.	Puducherry	2
37.	Lakshadweep	0
TOTAL		877