

Jewelers told to enhance quality of silver jewelries

REPUBLICA

KATHMANDU, Jan 15: Stakeholders have underlined the need to adopt new innovative technology and enhance quality of silver jewelries to make them competitive in the international market.

Speaking at a Public Private Dialogue (PPD) held in the capital on 'Enhancing Export Competitiveness of Silver Jewelry' on Wednesday, they said export of Nepali silver jewelries in world's major markets like USA, Hong Kong, Germany and the United Kingdom was still negligible despite the government including silver jewelry in Nepal Trade Integration Strategy (NTIS) list.

The government has included 13 products and six services in the NTIS list to promote their exports.

The PPD was organized jointly by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) and GIZ.

Speaking at the program, former Commerce Secretary Purshottam Ojha said export of Nepali silver products is discouraging as do not meet global standards. "Also we don't have any specific standard for silver jewelry. It is one of the reasons hampering export of Nepali silver jewelry," he added.

Ojha said Nepali silver jewelry was losing competitive edge because of local jewelers' inability to adopt latest technologies in manufacturing of silver jewelries. "Jewelers should maintain traditional cultural identity as well as adopt new technology to come up with new designs in a bid to make Nepali silver products competitive," he added.



He also said the government should Certificate of Origin to exporters, introduce grading system, and provide subsidy to jewelers for silver imports.

Meanwhile, jewelers say the government should come up with a clear policy to promote Nepali silver jewelries in the global market. "Though silver products have been included in NTIS list, the government lacks specific programs and proper framework to promote silver jewelries," Swoyambhu Ratna Tuladhar, managing director of Yak and Yeti Enterprises. To make Nepali silver products more competitive, he suggested to the government to announce tax subsidy on import of silver.

Meanwhile, Toya Narayan Gyawali, joint secretary of Ministry of Commerce and Supplies (MoCS) urged traders to not compromise on quality. He also said the government was doing internal homework for introducing minimum standards for silver jewelries.