

Gold surges to Rs80,500

KARACHI: Amid stability in rupee-dollar parity, a massive jump in international gold prices on Tuesday pushed up local yellow metal rates to an all-time high of Rs80,500 per tola and Rs69,016 per 10 grams, up Rs1,300 and Rs1,115 over Monday's rate.

International gold price swelled by \$21 per ounce to \$1,429 which triggered a fresh price hike in domestic rates.

Director Top Line Securities, Mohammad Sohail said some people might be investing in yellow metal, however 'the US dollar and National Savings would continue to attract investors' amid falling real estate and equity prices.

Chairman All Pakistan Jewellers Association (APJA), Mohammad Arshad said some people are taking the risk of investing in gold bars of five to 10 grams in view of soaring prices.

"In previous years, jewellery sales used to thrive for three months after Eidul Fitr. However, this year jewellers have very little work in terms of making bridal sets and jewellery pieces," he said.

"It is really a tough year for both jewellers as well as consumers in terms of jewellery sales. Owing to skyrocketing gold prices, people are opting for imitation jewellery sets," he said.

Mohammad Imran, an imitation jewellery dealer at Marriot Road, Bolton Market, dispelled the notion that people are making a beeline for artificial jewellery sets after record high prices of gold.

"Our sales are also flat by 15-20 per cent than last year as rising cost of living triggered by high food prices and utility bills has hit consumers' spending," he said.

Imran said the pace of price hike in artificial jewelley is far lower than gold related items' prices. He claimed that artificial set prices have gone up by only 10pc in the last three to four months since manufacturers use imported stones (mostly procured from China) which costs more due to rupee devaluation against the dollar.

He was of the view that the current marriage season has not been in full swing after Eidul Fitr as many families are avoiding holding marriage ceremonies due to scorching heat wave in the city. "This is another reason of slowdown in sales of artificial jewellery sets," he added.

According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), gold imports fell by 37pc in quantity and 38.5pc in value to 299kgs and \$11.86 million in 11MFY19. Jewellery exports plunged by 19.5pc to \$4.7m in 11MFY19.

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