

Priya Sheth

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Maharashtra govt's decision to ban food items at shops selling tobacco fraught with challenges

- > Maharashtra, which came out with a notification on January 9, became the first state to enforce the ban.
- > Six months later, the state is struggling with implementation challenges, the sources said.



The Maharashtra government is struggling to implement a ban on sale of tobacco at shops that sell chocolates, chips and other edible items, sources told CNBC-TV18.

In January 2018, the Maharashtra government had issued a notification stating that food business operators will not be allowed to sell FMCG products and tobacco in the same premises.

Maharashtra, which came out with a notification on January 9, became the first state to enforce the ban.

However, six months later, the state is struggling with implementation challenges, the sources said adding the local tobacco associations are protesting against the ban.

The local tobacco associations, which make up about 12 lakh small tobacco & FMCG outlets, has made numerous appeals to the state as well as Centre to revoke

this order, said sources. They are being represented by the Mumbai Bidi Tambakhu Vyapari Sangh.

The associations expect to meet the state government officials once again over the next 2-3 weeks and discuss how they could see a 50-60 percent drop in income, if they were to choose to trade between tobacco and FMCG products. They have asked the state government for financial assistance, if the ban is not revoked.

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which is tasked with the implementation of the order, is also expected to have a dialogue with the associations over the next few weeks. However, the state FDA officials hope to implement the notification over the next 3-6 months in a phase wise manner, the sources said.

Source: <https://www.cnbctv18.com/economy/maharashtra-govts-decision-to-ban-food-items-at-shops-selling-tobacco-fraught-with-challenges-400581.htm>