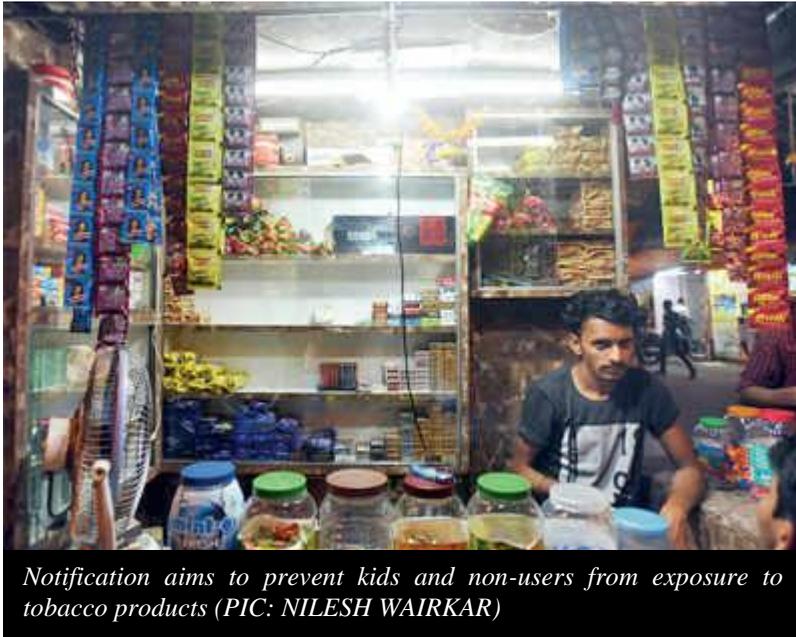


No sale of FMCG products along with tobacco: Diktat will affect our livelihood, say shopkeepers

By Satish Nandgaonkar, Mumbai Mirror | Jul 6, 2018



Notification aims to prevent kids and non-users from exposure to tobacco products (PIC: NILESH WAIRKAR)

Retail association rallies against GR prohibiting sale of chips, candy, bread, soft drinks, etc at paan-beedi shops.

More than a thousand retail shopkeepers staged a protest on Thursday against a government notification restricting the sale of FMCG products alongside tobacco, lamenting the heavy dent in their

livelihood the diktat will cause in an already reeling economy.

Even though the notification was issued by Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) commissioner Pallavi Darade on January 9, and is yet to be stringently implemented, the retailers are worried that the state, close on the heels of the recently-executed plastic ban, might suddenly decide to up the pressure on them.

According to the notification issued as per the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, paan-beedi shops and tobacco retailers cannot sell consumer products like candy, chips, biscuits, soft drinks, bread, eggs, etc along with tobacco products. The move is aimed at preventing children and non-users from being exposed to the vice.

The Federation of Retailers Association of India (FRAI) and Mumbai Bidi Tambakhu Vyapari Sangh (MBTVS) is rallying against the rule saying that that it could severely impact the incomes of micro, small and medium retail shopkeepers across the state, even though most shopkeepers Mirror spoke to had not received any direct communication from the FDA or the government indicating that the ban has not been aggressively implemented.

Over 12 lakh retailers on edge

Shashank Rao, president, MBTVS, said, “Yes, the FDA hasn’t implemented it but that does not mean that they won’t implement it at all. We have been trying to convince the government that this will severely impact over 12 lakh retailers who rely on selling multiple products for their survival. The notification will also lead to potential harassment from the authorities.”

“Tobacco retailers in the state are already facing immense financial pressure due to extreme regulations on the tobacco industry especially on controls of advertising at the point of sale. Together these measures will increase their cost of doing business and result in an at least 40 per cent fall in their earnings,” Rao said.

Retailers say if the regulation must be implemented it should be done through a democratic, consultative process, and that they should be given time to diversify or change the nature of their business.

The notification also envisages heavy fines – Rs 5,000 for the first offence, and loss of retail licence is caught violating the norms for the third time.

Source: <https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com/mumbai/other/no-sale-of-fmcg-products-along-with-tobacco-diktat-will-affect-our-livelihood-say-shopkeepers/articleshow/64877422.cms>