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Sale Of Gutka In Plastic Sachets Rampant Despite Ban In Ahmedabad

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Sale of gutka in plastic sachets rampant despite ban in Ahmedabad

[Paul John](#) / TNN / Updated: Jun 14, 2012, 15:31 IST



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AHMEDABAD: Sale of gutka and pan masala is rampant in plastic sachets, even though the Supreme Court has levied a ban on them since March 1 last year. Strings of pan masala and gutka sachets of numerous brands continue to hand in shops across the city, even as shopkeepers feign ignorance. "Who said there is a ban," says Ram Vaghasiya, who runs a pan shop in Shivranjani. There were tobacco products and pan masalas of more than 20 popular brands in his shop. Bhadresh, another shopkeeper in the area, said the supplies continue to be packaged in plastic sachets. "These sachets are safe to carry and convenient to store the product. It has a profit margin of about Rs 5-10 per packet â one packet contains about 55 sachets," he said. Gutka sellers say that the paper bags are vulnerable to wear and tear and will result in a price hike of tobacco products and pan masalas by over 30%.

The Food Safety and Standards Regulation 2011 has provisions for imposing Rs 25,000 fine on anyone selling food products containing substances injurious to health. A senior official of the food and drugs department said, "The ban exists since last one year. Gutkha which comes mixed with tobacco, magnesium carbonate and nicotine was declared injurious to health way back

in 2007. It was only recently that the state government had taken a stern decision to enforce the law."

The ministry of environment and forests has issued circular banning sale of gutka in plastic sachets. The onus of enforcing the ban is on the civic agencies, especially the health department. Since Ahmedabad does not have any manufacturing units, the role of the environment department is limited. The [AMC](#) claims that they have initiated action against shopkeepers selling tobacco products in plastic wrappings.

A large, semi-transparent watermark of the letters 'TOI' in a serif font is centered on a light gray background with a diagonal shadow effect.

About the Author

[Paul John](#)

Paul John is special correspondent at The Times of India, Ahmedabad and reports on urban infrastructure, RTI and taxation related issues. He enjoys doing human interest stories and going to rural areas and reporting on issues affecting people there.

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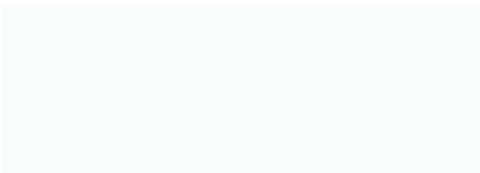
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