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Five Schoolchildren Caught At Hookah Bar In Raid

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Five schoolchildren caught at hookah bar in raid

TNN / Updated: Mar 6, 2012, 06:23 IST

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BANGALORE: After cracking down on people [smoking](#) in public, BBMP has now turned to [entertainment](#) hubs selling hookah illegally. On Monday, BBMP raided a snooker club on Residency Road and caught five high school students, including two girls, smoking a hookah. When BBMP raided the [7 Hills Snooker Club](#) at 1.15pm, the health officers' team found high school students of nearby private schools smoking the banned hookah. "The club flouted rules and was selling hookah to schoolchildren. We raided the club and cancelled its trade licence. The shop was shut down," said K Shivakumar, Shantala Nagar corporator who spearheaded the Palike team in the raid. The BBMP seized five hookah operators, 25 packs of flavoured molasses tobacco packets and a showcase with 14 packets of cigarette. Though there were 50 students in the club, only five were smoking the hookah. No one was arrested but the students were warned. The raid was based on a complaint given by a member of the public.

City cafe owners have seen their business go down the tube after the ban on hookahs in April 2011. The loss in business ranges between 30% and 70%, depending on how big a component hookah was to their overall daily revenues. A question raised by corporator NR Ramesh in the [BBMP council](#) in 2011 led to the then mayor SK Nataraj asking the corporation to order cafes to stop offering hookahs to customers. By early April, the civic body issued orders and raided cafes and shisha bars to seize hookah devices.

Most cafes offering the hookah admitted that business had taken a hit. According to BBMP, minors were getting hooked to hookahs. Legal Status In Mumbai In Mumbai, the [Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation](#) has allowed hookah bars. The BMC, like BBMP, had kept the fate of hookah joints in the balance for years with on-and-off rulings, but was recently rapped by the Bombay high court for its indecisiveness. It has given hookah bars legal status and allowed them to operate under strict conditions like separate smoking and non-smoking sections and no food and beverages service in smoking areas. Cafe owners ask how two cities can have different rules related to an area controlled by a central law, the Control of Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

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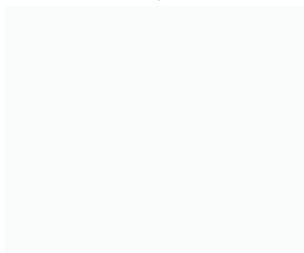
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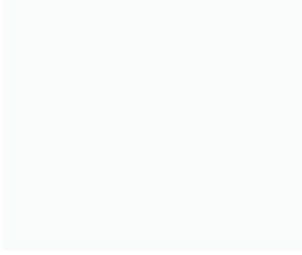
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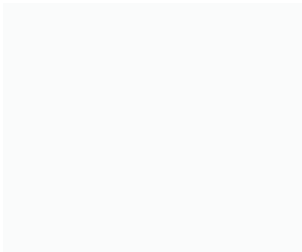
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