

# Hookah bars banned in Panchkula

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The District police have banned the use of hookah bars in Panchkula. The orders banning the use of hookah bars were issued here on Thursday and will remain in force till March 29.

The ban orders came after it was found that the hookah bars were serving tobacco to people. The ban comes days after a meeting was held on the issue by Deputy Commissioner, Panchkula, Ashima Brar, and was attended by senior officials of the district administration as well. The district task force for monitoring of the abuse of nicotine as a chemical met, headed by Deputy Commissioner, Panchkula, on January 25 and was attended by, among others, the Sub Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) of Panchkula and Kalka along with some senior officials of the health department of the district.

The ban was imposed as the claims by the owners of the hookah bars that they have not been serving any tobacco were found to be false.

The ban orders were issued by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Panchkula, Parul Kush Jain. According to the orders, the hookah bars were serving tobacco to people. Government officials said that earlier, they had clamped down on the hookah bars and some of them had even been closed. There were two hookah bars that have been in operation in the city, officials said.

According to officials, earlier, during the scrutiny it was found that not only were students visiting these hookah bars, but even minors have been going there. It was found that college students and children have been visiting these hookah bars that have been serving nicotine to them. "The need to ban the use of hookah bars was felt in the district," read the government's ban order. The ban order follows after the status check of the hookah bars in the city and the directions by Punjab and Haryana High Court earlier that Haryana state constitute a permanent task force for monitoring the abuse of nicotine in chemical form that is being used in hookah bars.

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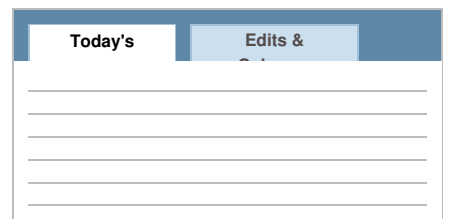
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