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# HC: No need for separate licence to serve hookah

DHNS

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Restaurants do not require a separate licence to serve hookah to customers in a dedicated smoking zone on their premises but must not use any illegal drugs in the pipe, the High Court ruled on Thursday.

Hearing a petition by Diamond Enterprises, which runs a restaurant named "Brews n Bytes"™ in 4th T Block, Jayanagar, Justice A S Bopanna ordered that only tobacco must be used in the hookah and not any illegal drug. The government counsel contended that some parlours in Bengaluru were using drugs in the hookah. The bench directed the police that if they have credible information about any illegal activity being carried out at hookah parlours, they were at liberty to inspect the place.

Brews n Bytes, besides serving coffee and snacks, caters to hookah customers in its dedicated zone for smokers. Diamond Enterprises complained that the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Mico Layout subdivision, had insisted that the restaurant required a separate license to serve hookah. According to the petitioner, when it approached the BBMP for a separate licence to serve hookah, the civic body stated there was no need for one.

Diamond Enterprises then approached the court seeking its direction to the police not to interfere in the business of the said restaurant or obstruct it from serving hookah to customers. The bench passed an order stating that there was not need for a separate licence and disposed of the petition.

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