

# TOBACCO SALES AND ADVERTISING IN HOSPITALITY VENUES IN 6 CITIES IN INDIA

## BACKGROUND

Despite India's comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS) under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), hospitality venues remain settings where tobacco use and promotion are allowed.

This study explored tobacco and nicotine sales and advertising in hospitality venues in India.

## METHODS

- In Sept.–Oct. 2025, we conducted observations for tobacco sales and advertising in 1,135 hospitality venues in six cities (Lucknow, Bengaluru, Gandhinagar, Guwahati, Jaipur, and Bhubaneswar)
- Venues were randomly sampled from public business directories, stratified by city, venue type, and price tier
- Data came from restaurants (n=744), bars/lounges (n=113), and hotels (n=278) that were open and had at least 30 seats or rooms
- Descriptive statistics were reported

# LIMITED TOBACCO ADVERTISING ACROSS HOSPITALITY VENUES AND ONGOING SALES IN SOME BARS AND LOUNGES INDICATE PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STRONGER SALES RESTRICTIONS IN INDIA



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	Tobacco industry	E-cigarette & nicotine product industry	Pharma industry
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Competing Interests: Dr. Cohen was a paid consultant in litigation against a tobacco company.

## RESULTS

- Tobacco sales were available in 26% (n=29) of bars/lounges, 6% (n=43) of restaurants, and 1% (n=3) of hotels
- Products sold included cigarettes; bidis; smokeless tobacco; and e-cigarette devices, liquids, and replacement components; brands included Gold Flake (cigarettes), Trust (bidis), Vimal (smokeless tobacco), and Elf Bar (e-cigarettes)
- We identified tobacco advertising in 3% (n=3) of bars/lounges and <1% (n=3) of restaurants, promoting cigarette brands such as Classic and Marlboro

## CONCLUSIONS

Tobacco and nicotine product sales were observed across all venue types, while tobacco advertising was rare and limited to a small number of bars/lounges and restaurants.

The low prevalence of advertising suggests that there is good compliance with existing restrictions on tobacco marketing in hospitality venues. The availability of tobacco products in these social settings indicates ongoing opportunities for exposure and access.

Strengthening enforcement and considering additional restrictions on point-of-sale availability may further support tobacco control efforts and the denormalization of tobacco use.

## AUTHORS

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