



# NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

NRAI / 2-12

08 September 2020

To,  
The Hon'ble Chief Secretary,  
Govt of Maharashtra,  
Mantralaya  
Mumbai

**Kind Attention:** Shri Sanjay Kumar, IAS

**Subject:** Request to help the beleaguered Restaurants Industry and allow resumption of Dine-In business in Maharashtra

Respected Sir,

Greetings from National Restaurant Association of India. NRAI is the Indian Restaurant Industry's leading Association. Founded in 1982 and headquartered in Delhi, we are the voice of the India restaurant industry representing the interests of the massive food service sector in India. The restaurant industry, valued at ~INR 4.25 Lakh Crores is a significant player in the service segment, contributing over 2.1% to the G.D.P. of India, and provides direct employment to over 7 million Indians.

Sir, let me begin by saying that we truly appreciate the herculean efforts being made by the Govt of Maharashtra in fighting this global pandemic. We also appreciate the rationale behind the temporary shutdown of Restaurants, Food Courts, Cafes, Bars, Pubs, Lounges and discotheques etc all over Maharashtra.

Sir, it has now been almost six months of lockdown in Maharashtra and we understand the necessity. However, we now find ourselves inadequate to sustain this lockdown any further and fear that any further delay may permanently cripple the entire sector. In any case, we foresee almost one-third of our restaurants to never open again. In light of the above, I humbly make the following submissions to the Government of Maharashtra through your good offices:

**1. Permit Dine-In Services in Restaurants in Non-Containment Zone**

- a. Sir, as per the "Mission Begin Again-IV" circular bearing Ref no DMU/2020/CR 92/DisM-1 dated 31/08/2020, issued by Department of Revenue and Forest, Disaster Management, Relief & Rehabilitation, Dine-In at the restaurants is not in the Prohibited activity/negative list.
- b. However, the circular is also silent on specific permission to allow restaurants to reopen. We therefore seek your immediate and kind intervention to clarify this and permit restaurants in non-containment zones to open for Dine In.

**ANURAG KATRIAR**  
Executive Director & CEO  
deGustibus Hospitality  
Pvt. Ltd.  
**President**

**KABIR SURI**  
Co-Founder & Director  
Azure Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.  
**Vice President**

**PRATIK POTA**  
CEO  
Jubilant FoodWorks Ltd.  
**Hony. Secretary**

**NITIN SALUJA**  
Founder Chaayos  
Sunshine Teahouse  
Pvt. Ltd.  
**Hony. Jt. Secretary**

**MANPREET SINGH**  
Director  
K S Hotels Pvt. Ltd.  
**Hony. Treasurer**

**PRAKUL KUMAR**  
**Secretary General**



## NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

- c. This will provide a major relief to our no-so-solvent and majorly cash strapped industry. In absence of any direct fiscal support to the sector, ability to open and earn from operations will provide a big relief for us to support the lacs of people directly and indirectly employed by our industry, along with giving much needed contribution to the coffers of the Government vide Excise, VAT and GST collections

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## 2. Standard Operating Procedures for Restaurants

- a. NRAI has spent a lot of time and effort in preparing a very detailed SOP, incorporating the guidelines issued by the WHO, Union Ministry for Family welfare and Health and the FSSAI. The same is attached herewith for your quick perusal
- b. These SOPs will ensure that the F&B operations is carried out in a hygienic, safe and secure way and keeping the consumers safe.
- c. We request you to kindly make this document as the basis for opening and operating the eateries.

## 3. Service of alcohol on the TABLES

- a. Sir, as you are aware, Ministry of Home Affairs order dated 29/08/2020, has removed "Bars" from the negative/prohibited list.
- b. Many states such as Punjab, Haryana, Orissa, Delhi, West Bengal, Karnataka etc have already permitted establishments with liquor license to serve alcohol on the table to its patrons.
- c. We request that you consider the same and allow similar relaxation in Maharashtra too.
- d. We feel that since the liquor vends in Maharashtra are already allowed to open, extending the same to the restaurants is a very justified request.
- e. This will surely boost consumption and also help the Government with some additional taxes by way of VAT and excise duties.

## 4. Excise Fee Rationalisation

- a. Sir, let me begin by stating that we have made several representations to the Hon'ble Principal Secretary (State Excise) in this regard and have been in positive and active dialogue with her.
- b. Our business is now shut for six of the twelve months in the current fiscal and we have had zero revenue thus far. Consumption going forward is also expected to be very subdued.
- c. We therefore request the government ot kindly **extend the tenure of the current FL-III licenses up to 31<sup>st</sup> of March-2021** without payment of any further renewal fee.

## NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

- d. This may cause an immediate minor dent to the cash-strapped exchequer by way of shortfall in collection to the license fee renewal. However, this will also ensure that there could be additional avenues for liquor sales resulting in higher tax collection in the long run.
- e. Alternatively, we propose that the Government charge us the renewal fee on a pro-rata basis for the residual part of the current fiscal. We cannot be expected to pay fee for the period we were asked to remain shut by the Government.
- f. We also need two additional concessions on this:
  - i. Please roll back the proposed 15% hike in the FL-III renewal fee. This is totally unjustified in the most disruptive year for business.
  - ii. Allow us to pay the fee in three equal instalments on 31<sup>st</sup> Oct, 31<sup>st</sup> Jan and 31<sup>st</sup> March

### 5. Permission to allow Open Air & Terrace Seating

- a. Various studies suggest that open-to-air seating is one of the smartest ways to ensure safe dining experience. Open air environments is decidedly more conducive for dining out in the post-pandemic world.
- b. Many global cities like New York, London, Paris and Amsterdam are in fact actively encouraging open air seating.
- c. I therefore urge you to make amendments to the current laws governing the subject and allow dining service on restaurant terraces and open areas abutting the restaurants.
- d. This will be a historical and a landmark decision. We would love Maharashtra to be the first state to make this move, lead by an example and set the benchmarks for other states to follow.
- e.

Sir, as we fight to eke out a mere survival for ourselves, we look up to you for your support and humbly pray to you to help our beleaguered sector. As second largest employers of human capital in India after agriculture, our success or failures impacts more lives than many other troubled sectors.

Lastly sir, we also need to start breathing again because we believe that Hospitality sector is a key fuel that will kickstart and propel the economic engine of India again. We need your support to make this happen.

Thanking You,  
Yours Sincerely,



**Anurag Katriar**  
**President**

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