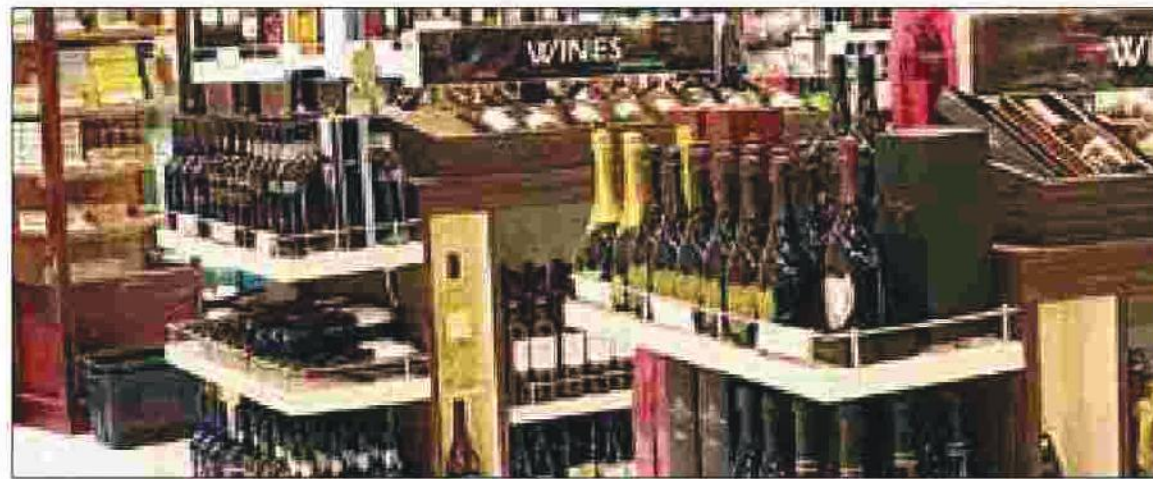


Delhi govt mulls allowing liquor sale at malls, approves home delivery of alcohol

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NEW DELHI: The Delhi government is working on allowing bars, pubs, and liquor shops in malls with separate entry and exit to sell alcohol bottles while following social distancing. However, consumption of alcohol on the premises will not be allowed, according to government officials. With tippers queuing up outside liquor vends more private shops are expected to open from Friday.

Meanwhile, the Delhi government has approved of home delivery of alcohol with third parties like Swiggy or Zomato taking up the delivery process through a token system. "You have to apply for a token online, the process is similar to the E-pass system," said a senior official in the Delhi Secretariat.



Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC) Director General, Vinod Giri said, "There are several measures that we have suggested to balance the demand and supply and avoid tippers from breaking social-distancing norm at liquor shops. Like, online token system with time slots, allowing shops in malls that have a separate entry and exit to function, bars and pubs that have liquor could sell bottles."

"The Government is aware

of these measures and has assured that they are working on similar lines. We may expect more ways of procuring alcohol in the near future," he added.

The Delhi government's target is to have around 180 shops fully open and functional soon. There was operational issues on the first two days as only 40 to 50 shops opened and shut as crowd management became difficult, said an official.

In an internal meeting with the Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who also

holds the Finance portfolio, officials pointed out that 'Special Corona fee' of 70 per cent may be too excessive. According to sources, the state government may later review the Corona fee on liquor as Delhi's neighbouring states are selling alcohol at a comparatively lesser price which may affect the sales in the Capital. This may not be feasible in the long run.

Delhi is currently facing a financial crunch and 'Special corona fee' of 70 per cent levied on sale of alcohol may be too extreme a measure to compensate for the financial loss, according to an official.

Meanwhile, on Thursday, Gurgaon saw hardly any queues at liquor shops as roughly 200 plus outlets became functional. Some shops did not require policing and social distancing could be maintained.