

Theme Parks, multiplexes in Maharashtra yet to get entertainment tax refund

Theme parks and multiplexes in Maharashtra may move court to get the entertainment tax refund that was promised as incentive in the state's tourism policy but was later subsumed under the goods and services tax (GST).

These companies haven't received tax refund despite a high-level committee — formed by the order of the Bombay High Court — allocating 110 crore for speedy processing of the grants.

With no respite in sight, these companies are considering moving court for relief. Under the state's tourism policy, the state government had waived off entertainment tax — then at 15% — in order to incentivise theme parks and multiplexes. However, after GST was introduced in July 2017, the entertainment tax was subsumed and an 18% GST was levied. Many companies filed petitions in the court seeking relief, arguing that the change in the tax regime had made the business unviable. Later, the high court passed an order to form a high-level committee to determine the methodology for extending the entertainment tax benefits.

(Source: www.economictimes.indiatimes.com)



Pandemic fallout: Kerala tourism and hotel sectors in a tangle despite reopening



While owners say banks are not extending loans which are crucial to do repairs and make hotels ready to receive guests, banks are worried about the bleak prospects of repayment when the Covid situation is fluid.

The sectors want specific financial packages for them for revival if at all visitors start arriving. The opening of the tourism sector and beaches recently gave much-needed relief to the hotels and restaurants in the state.

However, the sector hasn't received the required boost as many of the hotels haven't begun their operations, especially in premium tourism areas like Kovalam. Officials of the Kerala Hotel and Restaurant Association (KHRA) allege that the government and private banks are not giving loans to the tourism industry to revive their business.

(Source: www.newindianexpress.com)

COVID-19 update: Tourists in Goa to be photographed and fined if found without masks

In the latest COVID-19 update, Goan government has decided to photograph and fine tourists who are found roaming in the city without masks. Recently, several tourists in Goa have been noticed without masks and arguing with the authorities unnecessarily. Panaji Mayor Uday Madkaikar made the crucial announcement on Monday and said that police will now find such tourists, photograph them, and impose a fine to teach a lesson.

Of late, Goa has been flooded with tourists (since the borders reopened). People have been pouring in from all over the country, which has resulted in unmanageable crowds at some of the most prominent attractions in the beach state.

(Source: www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com)



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» If Salons Can Run, Why Not Spas: Delhi High Court Asks Government

If salons are working, then why not spas, asked the Delhi High Court while telling the AAP government today to re-look its decision prohibiting the operation of spas in the national capital. The query was posed to the Delhi government by Justice Navin Chawla who said prima facie there is a merit in the submission of the spa owners that if salons are allowed to operate, then they too should be permitted to function.

The court directed the Delhi government to take a fresh decision with regard to running of spas based on the submissions made by its owners and file an affidavit within a week indicating what it has decided.

With the direction, the court listed the matter for further hearing on December 16.

(Source: www.ndtv.com)

Rajasthan to impose lockdown in containment zones, night curfew in 13 districts

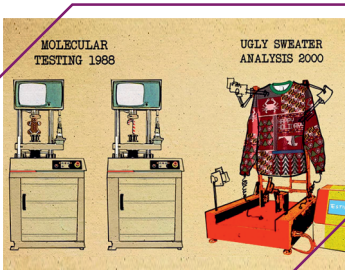
In view of the increasing cases of Covid-19 in Rajasthan, the Rajasthan government has decided to impose lockdown in containment zones, and night curfew in 13 districts. Also, schools and colleges will remain closed till December 31.

The government issued guidelines for surveillance, containment and caution for the period of December 1 to December 31. "Rajasthan is at a critical juncture in its fight against Covid-19. The confluence of certain factors such as recent festival season, onset of winter and laxity in observance of Covid-19 guidelines pose the risk of the situation aggravating, thus putting a strain on the health infrastructure," said Abhay Kumar, principal secretary, home, issuing the guidelines.

In areas outside containment zones, schools, colleges, educational and coaching institutes will remain close till December 31. Also, cinema halls, theatres, entertainment parks, social or religious, or any large congregation is not permitted.



» Mall of America launches innovative online Santa experience for COVID Christmas 2020



Mall of America's online Santa retailtainment experience is a response to the global coronavirus pandemic. Initially designed as a socially distanced, bookable tour with a video call to Santa, the mega mall had to pivot and move online after the state Governor scrapped indoor Santa on November 18th.

In a tongue-in-cheek, press release, Jill Renslow, Executive Vice President of Mall of America, says, "The holiday season needs more magic than ever this year, which is why we were thrilled that the Candy Cane Institute chose Mall of America to help bring this virtual experience to our guests all over the world. At Mall of America, we've always been guided by data-driven information to create a better guest experience, so we appreciate the efforts of the Candy Cane Institute and look forward to welcoming families to this new online holiday experience."

(Source : www.blooloo.com)

