

After Discounting, Complaints Of Illegal Kitchens Haunt Zomato

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AHAR has asked the company to give up on Zomato Gold for delivery orders

The body also urged Zomato to ensure the kitchens are licensed and run safely

In case of unavailability of delivery riders, Zomato has been told to share customer details with restaurants



As Zomato was still struggling with the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India's (FHRAI) grievances, another restaurant's body has raised their concerns. The Indian Hotel and Restaurant Association (AHAR) has been worried about the rising number of the illegally run kitchen on Zomato's platform.

The local restaurateurs' body has been unhappy about the high delivery commission, unavailability of delivery executives and discount offered on Zomato Gold delivery. Like FHRAI, AHAR has asked Zomato to abolish the newly launched scheme. The **matters were discussed** in a closed-door meeting between Zomato representatives and AHAR on November 5.

Zomato's spokesperson told **Inc42**, that the company has taken note of AHAR's concerns. "We are actively consulting with various restaurant associations to understand their concerns and resolve them with the right sustainable solutions for everyone," he added.

Talking about the illegal restaurant partners, the restaurateurs' body had claimed that a lot of kitchens are set up illegally, without any legal licence or proper certification for compliance with fire safety norms. It alleged that many kitchens listed on Zomato only have the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India licence, which is not enough. AHAR has instructed the company to keep a stringent eye on that.

Moreover, it has asked Zomato to display the restaurant's Mumbai Municipal Corporation (MMC) Act licence numbers against the restaurants' names on its portal.

AHAR also pointed out:

- Kitchens that serve till early in the morning are usually the ones with proper licensing
- Many kitchens duplicate the names of famous restaurants and brands, causing a major problem for the actual restaurant

To tackle the problems efficiently, AHAR has requested Zomato to:

- Put up pictures of each restaurant to avoid confusion
- Share data of customers so that the restaurant could deliver to customers, in case there is no delivery partner

The grievances against food aggregators like Zomato and Swiggy refuse to die down. In August restaurant partners started a #LogOut, marking their exit from the platform. Both the food aggregator went through a series of discussions with the FHRAI to reach a conclusion. But the matter never resolved completely. Looking at that, commerce minister Piyush Goyal **decided to mediate** between the food aggregators Zomato and Swiggy and FHRAI.