



To,
Mr. Kabeer Biswas

Date-16 Oct 21

CEO – Dunzo
No.201, 2nd Floor, Smart Square Complex
100 Feet Road, Indiranagar, Bangaluru 560 038.
kabeer@dunzo.in, kabeerbiswas@gmail.com
9971120039

Dear Sir,

SUBJECT: ILLEGAL SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF CIGARETTES IN CONTRAVENTION OF CIGARETTES AND OTHER TOBACCO PRODUCTS ACT BY E-PLATFORM OF DUNZO, INCREASING CIGARETTE CONSUMPTION AND COMPROMISING TOBACCO CONTROL OBJECTIVES OF GOI

We (Shram) are a self-help group with large number of doctors and professionals, working in the field of health and education since many years unstintingly building awareness campaigns against tobacco and alcohol. Objectives of Shram dictate us that we assist Govt in arriving at judicious decisions on all policy matters relating to the health of citizens. It is under this capacity we are writing you this letter.

Tobacco control has been a flagship program of Govt. of India. The Union Health Ministry has undertaken lot of measures to fight the menace of tobacco. The World Health Organization has indicated that tobacco contributes to death of a significant population in the developing world including India.

We are alarmed and shocked to tell you that inputs received by our NGO, reveal that your respected company is freely indulging in sale and delivery of cigarettes with complete disregard to the provisions of the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA), This not only puts health of youth at risk but also is totally deplorable conduct of a rapidly growing company with market cap in billions. We are sharing few of our concerns, and would like you to stop these unacceptable practices immediately which are pushing a respectable company of yours beyond the boundaries of legal rules drawn by Govt of India.

1. Our members after due verification have complained that your delivery services are leaving cigarette packets at the door-step of the purchaser without any verification of their age. This practice is not only allowing epidemic of tobacco to spread unabated in youth but also allowing school children to obtain cigarettes with impunity. In one instance a middle school child ordered them online and then circulated it in school among friends.
2. It must be emphasised that these children due to their fragile age and habits tend to share these cigarettes among themselves and are unaware that it can lead to explosive spread of covid-19 which is especially serious and can be fatal due to lack of immunisation in this tender age group. In these



connect@shram.co.in



www.shram.co.in



[@shramindia](https://twitter.com/shramindia)

distressing times of a respiratory pandemic sweeping the globe it is expected that Dunzo will not be blinded by only profit margins and behave in a manner befitting a company of its stature.

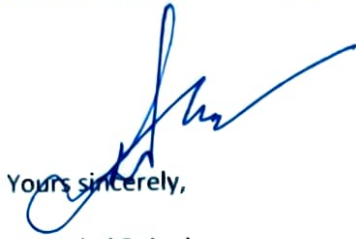
3. One fact against which our Group (Sharm) is agitating from years, is presence of smuggled cigarettes and their sales in our market. *These smuggled cigarettes belong to of contrabands and illicit cigarette category which avoid, high duty and taxes on cigarettes hence available at very cheap prices,* Therefore, in spite of high taxes in India many smokers have shifted to these cheaper smuggled cigarettes, defeating the anti-tobacco measure of high taxation enforced by GOI.
4. We were appalled to notice that **Dunzo** is selling foreign cigarettes which do not contain the Indian 85% Pictorial Statutory warning on both sides of the packet. This is a violation of Sec. 3 (o) read with Sec. 7(1) and 7(3) of the COTPA and the penalty for which is a punishment with imprisonment for a term which may extend up to a year or a fine. These foreign cigarettes sold by Dunzo are also without the 'Date of Manufacture' as required under the COTPA. These foreign cigarettes sold by Dunzo are **smuggled** into India and this also constitutes an offence under the **Customs Act**. This not only defeats the antitobacco campaign of Govt it also leads to huge loss of revenue to the tune of billions, which could have been diverted to social cause like fighting the pandemic in these distressing times.
5. Similarly, there is no verification of age of the delivery boys (who the website refers to as runner). This is also a violation of Rule 5(4) of the COTPA Rules 2004. We also noticed that some cigarettes sold by **Dunzo** were sold as 'lights' or 'Milds' cigarettes which is disallowed by the Rule 3(1)(g) of the COTPA (Packaging & Labelling) Rules, 2008.

Our deliberations have revealed that **Dunzo** is affiliated to and owned by Google India Pvt. Ltd., which is pertinent because Google has a stated 'no tobacco' policy but **Dunzo** is still using their technology to indulge in the business of the sale and distribution of cigarettes in India transgressing various provisions of the COTPA and the Rules made thereunder. Your actions not only cast aspersions on your image but also malign the image of a very respectable global corporate giant google. We would like to remind you that on the World No Tobacco Day Campaign run by **Dunzo** they have encouraged and exhorted the consumers and readers to kick the butt, but they are themselves indulging in the trade and commerce of this pernicious product and in a manner which completely transgresses various prohibitions under the COTPA and are criminal in nature.

Using these E-commerce platforms to promote the use and consumption of Cigarettes in India will compromise the anti-tobacco initiatives of the Government under the COTPA. You will agree That target of this misadventure are the youth and minors who are active on online platforms and they need to be protected. The Government has rightly prohibited sale of E-Cigarettes for these very reasons ie to protect our youth. Amazon has voluntarily refrained from selling Cigarettes. Google also has a 'no tobacco policy' but we are sure they are not aware that Dunzo is clandestinely profiteering Cigarettes distribution.

Given the above, we have to request you to immediately refrain from carrying on the sale, distribution and delivery of all cigarettes on your platform/ website with immediate effect, failing which we will be

forced to immediately take this matter up with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and initiate the due process of law by approaching honorable courts in this matter (in India and USA).



Yours sincerely,

Dr Mukul Bajpai
Founding Member (SHRAM)
[Connect @shram.co.in](mailto:Connect@shram.co.in)

Cc:

- 1) **Mr. Sanjay Gupta**
Head, Google India
No 3, RMZ Infinity, Tower E
Old Madras Road,
4th & 5th floor,
Bangalore 560 016
- 2) **Sundar Pichai**
CEO, Google Inc.
1600, Amphitheatre Parkway,
Mountain View
CA 940043
USA
Sundar@google.com

Note -This letter has been drafted and edited by our editorial team and has approval of members of

Shram