

75% liquor outlets in city limits set to reopen soon

The state excise department would issue district-level guidelines for the renewal of liquor licences of bars, permit rooms and liquor vends within municipal limits in Maharashtra. The excise department decision follows the uploading of the Supreme Court's July 11 order - okaying liquor sale on roads passing through city areas - on the apex court's official website on Wednesday evening.

Close to 15,000 permit rooms, bars and liquor vends in Maharashtra had their licences sealed from April this year due to the highway liquor ban. Of them, close to 9,000 establishments are expected to get relief soon.

Sources in the liquor industry said 75% of bars, permit rooms and liquor vends will be able to renew their licences in Pune district too. Close to 1,500 bars, permit rooms and liquor vends had had their liquor licences suspended in April owing to the ban. The SC order was a much-needed clarification as millions of jobs and the survival of the nation's tourism industry was at stake. The order will bring relief to almost 70% of the affected hotels. The clarifications cited in the order will allow a majority of the related establishments to go back to business as usual and give back employment to those affected.