



# Customers prefer spending ₹2k to queuing up at banks for exchange

Asmita Dey & Somit Sen | TNN

**New Delhi/ Mumbai:** The RBI's move to withdraw Rs 2,000 notes from circulation has pushed up its use in high-end restaurants, apparel stores and petrol pumps. As the notes continue to be legal tender, spending is seen as a better option than queuing up to exchange or deposit them in banks.

Petrol pumps in Mumbai saw nearly 15 times the normal usage of the notes for fuel payments. Apparel retailers also reported higher than usual spending using Rs 2,000 banknotes. In a promotional text message, a clothing retailer invited customers to spend Rs 2,000 notes in his stores.



Pic: Sanjay Hadkar

**CURRENCY CONUNDRUM**

Pradip Shetty, president of Hotel & Restaurant Association (HRAWI) Western India, said customers are increasingly use the notes to make payment at restaurants. "Earlier, cash payments were hardly being made using these notes," said Shetty.

Petrol Dealers' Association president Chetan Modi said that usually the 250-plus pumps across Mumbai would receive an average of 20

notes of Rs 2,000 denomination which has gone up to 300 notes since the RBI announcement. "There are heated arguments with customers who come to fill up fuel worth Rs 50 to Rs 100 for two-wheelers but hand out Rs 2,000 notes for payment," he said.

Rahul Mehta, chief mentor at the Clothing Manufacturers' Association of India (CMAI), said there has been a slight increase in the sale of apparel, particularly wedding outfits, in the past few days. Though 15-20% of the sales are facilitated via cash at present, Mehta is expecting that it will go up by at least 5% in the coming days.

However, no such trend has been visible in the case of regular items. "It appears that the common man does not possess such notes in bulk. For the last two years, Rs 2,000 notes were not seen much in circulation," said Praveen Khandelwal, secretary general at the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT).