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Hyderabad Imposes Midnight Curfew on Chai Dhabas

August 9, 2025

— Categories: Crime



Hyderabad, Police have enforced a new midnight curfew on chai dhabas, limiting roadside tea stalls and cafés to close by 12 a.m., in an effort to curb crime and public disturbances. Authorities have warned that any venue found operating past the deadline will face immediate closure.

On Thursday night, police conducted raids in various parts of the city, shutting down multiple roadside tea stalls. However, in areas such as Haider Chowk, some barbecue and food outlets remained open well into the night.

Law enforcement officials said late-night tea spots have increasingly become gathering points for criminal elements. “These places are often used as meeting spots to plan and execute unlawful activities,” one police representative noted. A similar operation earlier this year in Tower Market and nearby neighborhoods reportedly reduced crime rates, but enforcement later waned.

The renewed crackdown follows a deadly clash at a chai dhaba in Talak Chari, where a confrontation between two armed groups left one person dead and another injured. Police also raised concerns about public space encroachment, saying many tea stall operators continue to place seating areas on sidewalks and streets despite Sindh High Court orders to remove such setups.

The move has drawn strong criticism from the All Hyderabad Hotels and Restaurants Association, which sees the restriction as harmful to the hospitality sector. In a meeting held in Latifabad, association president Nawab Khan described the decision as a “conspiracy against the hotel industry,” warning that it would further damage a sector already grappling with shortages of gas, water, and electricity.

Khan argued that closing tea stalls and eateries early could lead to job losses and economic strain for small business owners. “We demand that legitimate businesses be allowed to operate without unnecessary hurdles,” he said, urging the district administration, SSP Hyderabad, and the city mayor to ensure protection for the industry.

The association also condemned recent violent incidents in the SITE Area and Talak Chari but maintained that law enforcement should target those responsible rather than impose blanket restrictions.

The meeting was attended by several key figures in the hospitality industry, including General Secretary Ghulam Sarwar Chandio, Haji Amir Rehman, Syed Abdul Shah, Adeel Nawab, Javed Agha, Saqib Shaikh, and Ainuddin Kakar, who collectively called for a review of the curfew policy.

For now, Hyderabad’s chai dhabas face a strict midnight deadline, with police vowing to continue inspections and enforce the order citywide.