

## **78% consumers want Government to permit eCommerce platforms to deliver all goods beyond essentials in all zones**

- **Consumers want ecommerce to deliver non-essentials in red zones too or atleast expand the lockdown essentials list so they can get items of urgent need**
- **Post lockdown relaxation, consumers say they will prefer buying items of need via local stores (instore or delivery) and ecommerce sites; Only 4% say will go to the mall to buy**
- **Feedback indicates consumers will soon be shopping for secondary essentials including items like books, stationery, tablets/laptops for online classes and WFH, printers, phone accessories, batteries, coolers, air conditioners, etc.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020, New Delhi:** The second phase of the COVID -19 lockdown is coming to an end. In the new notification issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on May 1<sup>st</sup>, it was announced that the lockdown will be extended by 2 more weeks, but many economic activities will now be permitted in areas classified into red, orange and green zones.

Ecommerce platforms over the last several years have made life convenient for consumers as anyone could buy all kinds of products from the comfort of their home and offices and receive it in a few days. It led to better prices, convenience and selection for the consumer. During the lockdown, ecommerce was restricted by the Government to deliver essentials only which was largely done to minimise people on the roads. While that was ok for most people for the first 2 weeks, people started realising a need for various items as they started Work from Home and as children in many families started their Online Classes from home.

According to the May 1 guidelines, ecommerce sites will now be allowed to deliver all products, including non-essential items, in orange and green zones. However, people in red zones can only receive essentials via ecommerce per the MHA order. Red zone cover most major cities and 33% of India's population.

People have been expressing concerns about their inability to purchase items beyond the essentials which some call the secondary essentials during lockdown, things like stationery, printer cartridges, batteries, books, basic tablets for children to participate in online classes. Given a large number of consumer concerns that had been received, LocalCircles conducted a survey to get a consumer pulse on how they would shop after the lockdown is relaxed by the Government. The survey received more than 16,000 votes from 12,343 unique consumers located in 210 districts across India.

In the first question, people were asked if the lockdown is relaxed in May, how would they go about purchasing items that they need beyond the essentials list. 26% said they will buy it from eCommerce sites, 41% said they will go to the local retail stores/markets and buy, 24% said they will try to get it delivered from local retail stores, while 4% said they will go to the mall and buy what they need.

It is pretty clear that consumers will not go to the crowded malls to shop for some time even after the lockdown is relaxed and local retail stores and ecommerce platforms would be their first choice to buy non-essential as well as essential items. A new model where they call or WhatsApp a local retailer or service provider who then delivers goods at the doorstep has quickly emerged as a new model during this lockdown period of the last 40 days.

Once the lockdown is relaxed in May, how would you go about purchasing items that you need (beyond the essentials list)?



Votes - 8,514



Post lockdown relaxation, Consumers will buy what they need (beyond essentials) via local retail stores and eCommerce; Only 4% say will go to the mall to buy

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In the second question, people were asked if the Government should permit eCommerce platforms to sell and deliver all goods that they sell as opposed to just essential supplies, once lockdown 2.0 is over. 78% voted in its favour while only 18% voted against it. 4% did not have an opinion.

In LocalCircles polls conducted in mid-April, 68% parents said their children need textbooks for online school classes to be effective while 24% parents said they did not have a screen (desktop/laptop/tablet) for child to access online classes. 43% households had said they needed office/school supplies while 33% had said they need a gadget urgently. None of these demands could be met as ecommerce was only delivering essentials. The Government did take action and permitted shops selling books and fans to open up with a notification dated April 24 by calling both these items essentials. However, in most districts that are red zones, these shops continue to stay shut due to a lack of clarity at the local administration levels.

Post May 3rd, should the Government permit eCommerce platforms to sell and deliver all goods that they sell as opposed to just essential supplies?



Votes - 7,834



78% consumers say Government must permit eCommerce platforms to deliver all goods beyond essentials

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While ecommerce has been permitted by the Government to deliver all goods in green and orange zones, the same should also be implemented in the red zones, per consumers. This will ensure that goods move to people as opposed to people moving to goods and minimise the number of people on roads. Per consumers, in addition to Government permitting ecommerce platforms to deliver essentials, local retailers and traders must also be permitted to take orders on phone/whatsapp and deliver them. Consumers have also expressed that if the Government feels that this cannot be done, at a bare minimum the secondary essentials to be



added to the lockdown essentials list so they are able to procure items of need from both ecommerce and local retail. Also, per the feedback from consumers, permitting this will ensure that people who have been under lockdown for over 40 days now get the secondary essentials thereby making the lockdown less painful.

LocalCircles will submit these findings to all key Central Government stakeholders so this consumer ask is considered and preferably acted upon by the Government.

## **About LocalCircles**

LocalCircles, India's leading Community Social Media platform takes Social Media to the next level and makes it about Communities, Governance and Utility. It enables consumers to connect with communities for most aspects of urban daily life like Neighborhood, Constituency, City, Government, Causes, Interests and Needs, seek information/assistance when needed, come together for various initiatives and improve their urban daily life. LocalCircles is free for consumers and always will be!

**Media Contact:** Akshay Gupta - [media@localcircles.com](mailto:media@localcircles.com), +91-8585909866