

Hotel's 'random act of negligence' ruins high-profile celebration

Industrialist sues 5-star for serving IMFL instead of imported at his party

Hotel apologises, but Sanjay Jindal of Jindal Drugs Private Limited demands one in writing plus refund and compensation to be given directly to a charity

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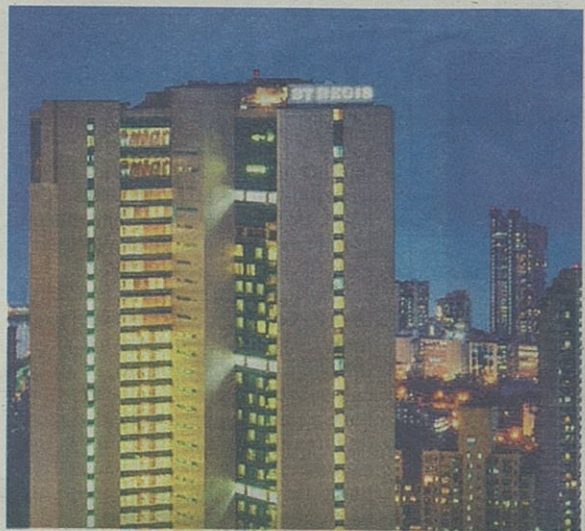
Industrialist Sanjay Jindal of Jindal Drugs Private Limited has taken a SoBo five star, part of an international chain, to court over serving Indian liquor instead of imported booze he had asked for at a party last month.

To teach Lower Parel-based St. Regis Hotel a lesson, all that Jindal has asked for in his suit is a refund of the advance paid to the hotel, a written apology, and Rs 8 lakh compensation to be paid directly to a charity.

Jindal alleges that this act — charging for foreign liquor while swapping it with Indian — seems to be the modus operandi of the hotel to maximise profits.

According to the Suit filed through Advocate Vivek Kantawala, Jindal had paid Rs 4 lakh as advance for the March 25 party at Luna Nudo night club. Among the invitees were

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St. Regis Hotel at Lower Parel; (right) Sanjay Jindal of Jindal Drugs Private Limited



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5-star sued for serving IMFL instead of foreign

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Industrialists, race-horse owners, polo and race regulars and guests from the entertainment world.

Jindal said he spoke to the hotel's general manager directly, whom he had met at the Mahalaxmi Race Course during one of the parties handled by St. Regis around the polo season.

Impressed with the party, Jindal decided to host one of his own at the hotel. The cost was fixed at Rs 6,000 per person plus taxes, with an arrangement that only foreign liquor would be served. Specific brands like Belvedere were mentioned.

Mid-way through the party, however, one of the guests approached Jindal complaining that Indian vodka brand Smirnoff was being served to the guests. Jindal immediately approached the bar and confronted the staff, who said it was a mistake and that it was being served only to guests who wanted to have vodka shots. "I could see that Belvedere vodka bottles were not even stocked in enough quantity to cater to the requirements of the invitees. This was an act of cheating," Jindal has said in his suit.

Jindal issued a legal notice to the hotel on March 29. The hotel, in an email communication to Jindal, apologised for the incident. The hotel said it was an 'eye opener' for them and that they were extremely 'embarrassed and saddened' as they failed to deliver due to a 'random act of sheer negligence by one erroneous associate.'

The hotel further claimed the incident took place only towards the end of the party and Jindal himself had checked everything before the party began at 9 pm. The hotel also claimed that



St Regis hotel at Lower Parel

people were at the venue till 2.30 am, an hour after the incident, and therefore the party was a success and not a disappointment.

As per the details of inventory mentioned in the legal reply, the hotel started with three bottles of Belvedere, four of Kettle One and two of Smirnoff. However, the closing inventory was one bottle of Belvedere, six of Kettle One and none of Smirnoff. "Your client will appreciate that most of the vodka which was served, was Belvedere vodka only," the reply states, based on the inventory mentioned.

The hotel said that their preliminary investigation had concluded that the 'mistake' was made by the bartender "in an attempt to expeditiously serve the shot and ensure utmost satisfaction."

Mumbai Mirror approached the St. Regis for its response on Tuesday evening, but the hotel refused to comment.