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# Craving alcohol amid lockdown, two TN men die after drinking aftershave mixed with soda

*Despite treatment, Hasan Mydeen and Arunpandian died in the hospital while Anwar Raja was battling for life.*



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**By Express News Service**

**PUDUKKOTTAI:** Two men died after consuming aftershave lotion mixed with soda as an alternative for liquor at the fishing hamlet of Kottaipattinam in Pudukkottai district on Friday night.

Arunpandian, 27, a native of Peikarumbu in Ramanathapuram, was a fisherman staying at Kottaipattinam. Anwar Raja, 33, and Hasan Mydeen, 35, of Kottaipattinam were his friends.

As TASMALC shops were shut for the past 11 days due to the ongoing lockdown, they had a craving for liquor or a substitute for it.

They came to know from somewhere that aftershave lotion could be a substitute for alcohol. Hence, they mixed it with soda and drank it.

They immediately developed nausea and fainted. Neighbours took them to Manamelkudi government hospital after arranging an ambulance.

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Despite treatment, Hasan Mydeen and Arunpandian died in the hospital while Anwar Raja was battling for life.

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Raja had been shifted to Aranthangi government hospital for treatment. Kottaipattinam police registered a case and began an investigation into the tragedy. Meanwhile, alcoholics unable to contain their cravings have been making attempts to break into TASMAL outlets. Already, a few cases were reported in Tiruchy and neighbouring districts.

Moreover, there are also reports of some people trying their hand at brewing hooch in interior areas.

Such incidents have been on the rise following the closure of TASMAL shops for more than 10 days because the stocks that had been piled up have run out.

For several days after the closing down of TASMAL shops, liquor was available in the black market at higher prices. "Now those who were selling liquor bottles in black also ran out of stock at many places. The person from whom I purchased in the initial days of curfew has no stock," said an alcoholic in Tiruchy.

Since many alcoholics tend to exhibit withdrawal symptoms, mental health doctors, both government and private, have started receiving inquiries.

Karthik Deivanayam, Pudukkottai Mental Health Officer, said that they had started receiving patients for withdrawal symptoms like restlessness, palpitation, anxiety, anger outburst, irritability, sleep disturbances, mood swing and hand tremors.

He said those dependent on alcohol might resort to alternative risky behaviour when they could not find liquor and this could be addressed through proper scientific treatment.

He further said, "I just want to emphasis on two points. First, treatment for withdrawal symptoms is available in all the PHCs and GHs. Second, we have ensured that adequate drugs are available there for the patients free of cost. So, the persons who are suffering from these symptoms should not go for substitutes to get high, which is dangerous. They can approach the government medical institutions for remedy."

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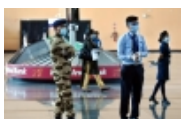
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