

3100 Bars And Liquor Shops May Soon Reopen Along National Highway

As the state has issued instructions to collectors about relaxing norms in rural areas along state and national highways, around 3100 bars and liquor shops may soon reopen. After the Supreme Court (SC) banned liquor shops within 500 metres of highways, the establishments had been closed. It is believed that the revised decision will benefit gram panchayats especially on the Mumbai-Goa and the old Mumbai-Pune highway (beyond Panvel).

As per the new rules, liquor sale licenses will be issued to villages with a population of at least 3,000 or a shop located at least 3 km away from a municipal corporation's boundary or at least 1 km away from a municipal council or nagar panchayat's boundary. The home department stated that licenses can be renewed by levying fees for two years (2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscals).

After the SC order, a few of the affected license holders approached the court and their plea was reconsidered. The court has now asked the states to hear the affected parties and decide on action. After hearing those affected in Maharashtra, the state home department decided to relax conditions.