# Merger of Daman with Gujarat

## What is the issue?

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People of the Union territory of Daman observed a total bandh in April to **protest the recent suggestion of Gujarat HC** that the Centre should merge Daman with Gujarat to ensure prohibition laws are effectively implemented in the dry state.

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## What happened?

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- After 23 people Vareli village in Surat district died after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in September 2016, Surat IG has arrested 14 liquor traders.
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- Accused — all residents of Daman — moved Gujarat High Court, seeking the quashing of the FIRs.
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- **They argued that sale of liquor was not an offence in Daman.**
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- On April 11, Justice Pardiwala expressed frustration with the **limited results from the prohibition policy**: "The prohibition policy in Gujarat state has not been able to yield positive results. Either the policy is not effective or something is wrong with the implementation of law."
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- The Central Government should consider denotifying Daman as a part of Union Territory and **make it a part of the Gujarat state,** so as to make the prohibition Act applicable, providing more stringent provision.
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## How important is the liquor industry for Daman and Diu?

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- The liquor industry is estimated to be worth Rs 30 crore in the district, and generated excise revenue of Rs 8.71 crore in 2016-17.
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- Diu's tourism industry is **dependent on its liberal liquor policy.**
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- Daman's liquor revenues are much higher — the Excise Department collected Rs 250 crore in 2016-17.
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## What could happen now?

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- Parliament has the power to reorganise states. The government can form a States Reorganisation Commission.
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- But such a move can proceed smoothly when there is a popular demand.
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- In a democracy, the will of the people is supreme. **The government will first have to ascertain the will of the people of Daman and Diu** before any merger can happen.
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### Source: Indian Express

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